



THE

# ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE

INDIA'S DEMAND FOR DOMINION STATUS

SPEECHES

BY

*THE KING, THE PREMIER, THE BRITISH  
PARTY LEADERS AND THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PRINCES  
AND PEOPLE OF INDIA.*

RS. TWO

G. A. NATESAN & Co.,

MADRAS



## NOTE

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The circumstances that led to the Round Table Conference and the discussions therein have attracted considerable attention both in India and abroad. There have indeed been differences of opinion in the country regarding the outcome of the deliberations. To some the Conference is a historic and momentous gathering, the declaration of the Princes to join a Federation with British India and the Premier's statement are the charter of a new freedom for India; while others have no good word to say of them. But all the same everybody is agreed that India's demand for Dominion Status has been re-inforced with remarkable eloquence and authority at the Round Table. The discussions, "were most valuable in informing and shaping public opinion" alike in England and in India. The speeches herein collected are thus of timely interest and the publishers have made every endeavour to present the full text of the speeches of members of the various delegations.

To add to the usefulness of the volume the publishers have included the full text of H. E. the Viceroy's Statement on the Genesis of the Conference as also a summary of the House of Commons debate on the Round Table Conference.

*THE PUBLISHERS.*

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## H. E. THE VICEROY'S STATEMENT : NOV. 1, 1929

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### THE GENESIS OF THE R. T. C.

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I have just returned from England where I have had the opportunity of a prolonged consultation with His Majesty's Government. Before I left this country, I said publicly that, as the King-Emperor's representative in India, I should hold myself bound to tell my fellow countrymen as faithfully as I might, of India's feelings, anxieties and aspirations. In my endeavour to discharge that undertaking, I was assisted by finding, as I had expected, a generous and sincere desire not only on the part of His Majesty's Government but on that of all persons and parties in Great Britain to hear and to appreciate everything that it was my duty to represent.

These are critical days, when matters by which men are deeply touched are in issue and when, therefore, it is inevitable that political feeling should run high and that misunderstandings, which would scarcely arise in conditions of political tranquillity, should obtain a firm foothold in men's minds. I have nevertheless not faltered in my belief that behind all the disquieting tendencies of the time, there lay the great mass of Indian opinion overflowing all divisions of race, religion or political thought fundamentally loyal to the King-Emperor and, whether consciously or not, only wanting to understand and to be understood. On the other side, I have never felt any doubt that opinion in Great Britain, puzzled as it might be by events in India,

or only perhaps partially informed as to their true significance, was unshaken in its determination that Great Britain should redeem to the full the pledges she has given for India's future. On both countries, the times have laid a heavy and, in some ways, a unique responsibility, for the influence on the world of a perfect understanding between Great Britain and India might surely be so great that no scales can give us the measure either of the prize of success or the price of failure in our attempts to reach it.

In my discussions with the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State, it was inevitable that the principal topic should have been the course of events in India. It is not profitable on the other side to discuss to what extent or with what justification the appointment of a Parliamentary Commission two years ago has affected the general trend of Indian thought and action. Practical men must take facts and situations as they are and not as they would have them to be.

#### SIMON COMMISSION

Sir John Simon's Commission, assisted as it has been by the Indian Central Committee, is now at work on its report, and until that report is laid before Parliament, it is impossible, and even if it were possible, it would, in the view of His Majesty's Government, clearly be improper, to forecast the nature of any constitutional changes that may subsequently be proposed. In this respect, every British party is bound to preserve to itself complete freedom of action. But what must constantly engage our attention, and is a matter of deep concern to His Majesty's Government, is the discovery of the means by which, when the Commission has reported, the broad question of British Indian constitutional advance may be approached in co-operation.

with all those who can speak authoritatively for opinion in British India.

I would venture to recall some words which I used in addressing the Assembly eight months ago on a reference to the then existing political situation. On the one side, I said it is as unprofitable to deny the right of Parliament to form its free and deliberate judgment on the problem as it would be short-sighted of Parliament to underrate the importance of trying to reach a solution which might carry the willing assent of political India. We shall surely stray from the path at the end of which lies achievement if we let go either one or the other of these two main guiding principles of political action.

#### INDIAN STATES

But there has lately emerged from a totally different angle another set of considerations which is very relevant to what I have just stated on this matter to be the desire of His Majesty's Government. The Chairman of the Commission has pointed out in correspondence with the Prime Minister, which, I understand, is being published in England, that as their investigation has proceeded, he and his colleagues have been greatly impressed in considering the direction which the future constitutional development of India is likely to take with the importance of bearing in mind the relations which may at some future time develop between British India and the Indian States. In his judgment, it is essential that the methods by which this future relationship between these two constituent parts of greater India may be adjusted should be fully examined. He has further expressed the opinion that if the Commission's report and the proposals subsequently to be framed by the Government take this wider range it would appear



necessary for the Government to revise the scheme of procedure as at present proposed. He suggested that what might be required after the reports of the Statutory Commission and the Indian Central Committee have been made, considered and published but before the stage is reached of the Joint Parliamentary Committee, would be the setting up of a Conference in which His Majesty's Government should meet representatives both of British India and of the States for the purpose of seeking the greatest possible measure of agreement for the final proposals which it would later be the duty of His Majesty's Government to submit to Parliament. The procedure by Joint Parliamentary Committee conferring with delegations from Indian Legislature and other bodies which was previously contemplated and is referred to in Sir John Simon's letter to myself of 6th February 1928 would still be appropriate for the examination of the Bill, when it is subsequently placed before Parliament, but would, in the opinion of the Commission, obviously have to be preceded by some such conference as they have suggested. With these views, I understand that His Majesty's Government are in complete accord, for while they will greatly desire when the time comes to be able to deal with the question of British Indian political development under conditions the most favourable to its successful treatment, they are with the Commission deeply sensible of the importance of bringing under comprehensive review the whole problem of the relations of British India and the Indian States. Indeed, an adjustment of these interests, in their view, is essential for the complete fulfilment of what they consider to be the underlying purpose of British policy, whatever may be the method for its furtherance which Parliament may decide to adopt.

## 1917 DECLARATION

The goal of British policy was stated in the Declaration of August 1917 to be that of providing for the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realisation of responsible Government in India as an integral part of the British Empire. As I recently pointed out, my own Instrument of Instructions from the King-Emperor expressly states that it is His Majesty's will and pleasure that the plans laid down by Parliament in 1919 should be the means by which British India may attain its due place among his Dominions. The Ministers of the Crown, moreover, have more than once publicly declared that it is the desire of the British Government that India should, in the fulness of time, take her place in the Empire in equal partnership with the Dominions. But in view of the doubts which have been expressed both in Great Britain and India regarding the interpretation to be placed on the intentions of the British Government, in enacting the statute of 1919, I am authorised, on behalf of His Majesty's Government, to state clearly that in their judgment, it is implicit in the Declaration of 1917 that the natural issue of India's constitutional progress, as there contemplated, is the attainment of Dominion Status.

In the full realization of this policy, it is evidently important that the Indian States should be afforded an opportunity of finding their place and, even if we cannot, at present, exactly foresee on what lines this development may be shaped, it is from every point of view desirable that, whatever can be done, should be done to ensure that action taken now is not inconsistent with the attainment of the ultimate purpose which those, whether in British India

or the States, who look forward to some unity of all India, have in view. His Majesty's Government consider that both these objects, namely, that of finding the best approach to the British Indian side of the problem, and secondly of ensuring that in this process the wider question of closer relations in the future between the two parts of greater India is not overlooked, can best be achieved by the adoption of procedure such as the Commission has outlined. When, therefore, the Commission and the Indian Central Committee have submitted their reports and these have been published, and when His Majesty's Government have been able in consultation with the Government of India, to consider these matters in the light of all the material then available, they will propose to invite representatives of different parties and interests in British India and representatives of the Indian States to meet them separately or together; as circumstances may demand, for the purpose of a conference and discussion in regard both to the British Indian and the All-Indian problems. It will be their earnest hope that, by these means, it may subsequently prove possible on these grave issues to submit proposals to Parliament which may command a wide measure of general assent.

It is not necessary for me to say how greatly I trust that the action of His Majesty's Government may evoke response from and enlist the concurrence of all sections of opinion in India, and I believe that all, who wish India well, wherever and whoever they are, desire to break through the webs of mistrust that have lately clogged the relations between India and Great Britain.

I am firmly assured that the course of action now proposed is at once the outcome of a real desire to bring to

the body politic of India the touch that carries with it healing and health and is the method by which we may best hope to handle these high matters in the way of constructive statesmanship.



# THE ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE

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*The opening of the Round Table Conference in the Royal Gallery of the House of Lords on Wednesday the 12th November 1930 was attended with stately splendour. As has been observed, for the first time in the history of British connection with India the King of England presided over the Conference and gave his Royal blessings to a historic gathering called upon to deal with the momentous problem of India's future constitution. There were 86 delegates in all: 16 from the Indian States, 57 representing British India and 13 the British political parties. The central figure in the scene was the King himself. The Premier, Princes and their Ministers sat to the right of the throne, Mr. Benn and other British delegates to the left and the British Indian delegation to the front. Among the keenly interested visitors were the Prime Ministers of the Dominions.*

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## PLENARY SESSION—FIRST DAY.

### H. M. THE KING EMPEROR

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**I***n opening the Conference H. M. the King said:—*

It affords me much satisfaction to welcome to the capital of my Empire representatives of the Princes, Chiefs and People of India and to inaugurate their Conference with my Ministers and representatives of other parties composing the Parliament in whose precincts we are assembled.

More than once a Sovereign has summoned historic assemblies on the soil of India but never before have British and Indian statesmen and rulers of Indian States met, as you now meet, in one place and round one table.

to discuss the future system of Government for India and seek an agreement for the guidance of my Parliament as to the foundations upon which it must stand.

Nearly ten years ago, in a message to my Indian Legislature, I dwelt upon the significance of its establishment in the constitutional progress of India. Ten years is but a brief span in the life of any nation, but this decade has witnessed not only in India but throughout all nations forming the British Commonwealth a quickening and growth in ideas and the aspirations of nationhood which defy the customary measurement of time.

It should, therefore, be no matter for surprise to men of this generation that, as was then contemplated, it should have become necessary to estimate and review the results of what was begun ten years ago and to make further provision for the future.

Such a review was lately carried out by the Statutory Commission, appointed by me for that purpose and you have before you the outcome of their labours, together with other contributions which have been, or can be made to the solution of the great problem confronting you. No words of mine are needed to bring home to you the momentous character of the task to which you have set your hands.

Each one of you will, with me, be profoundly conscious how much depends for the whole of the British Commonwealth on the issue of your consultations. This community of interest leads me to count as of happy augury that there should be present to-day representatives of my Government in all sister States of the Commonwealth. I shall follow the course of your proceedings with the closest and most sympathetic interest, not indeed without anxiety but with a greater confidence.

The material conditions which surround the lives of my subjects in India affect me dearly and will be ever present in your thoughts during the forthcoming deliberations. I have also in mind the just claims of the majorities and minorities, men and women, town dwellers and tillers of the soil, land-lords and tenants, strong and weak, rich and poor, of races, castes and creeds of which the body politic is composed.

For these things I care deeply. I cannot doubt that the true foundation of Self-Government is the fusion of such divergent claims in mutual obligations and in their recognition and fulfilment.

It is my hope that the future Government of India, based on this foundation, will give expression to her honourable aspirations.

May your discussion point the way to a sure achievement of this end and may your names go down in history as those of the men who served India well and whose endeavours advanced the happiness and prosperity of all my beloved people! I pray that Providence may grant you in a bounteous measure wisdom, patience and goodwill.

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## THE RT. HON. RAMSAY MACDONALD

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My first duty, as Chairman, is to ask your consent—I know it is forthcoming in full measure—to convey our humble duty to His Majesty and the expression of loyal gratitude with which we have welcomed his gracious presence here and the inspiration his words have given us. I know also that you would have me include our loyal and grateful appreciation of the kindly solicitude of Her Majesty the Queen, which my Indian friends, have been privileged to experience. Nor are we unmindful that it is to His Majesty's gracious permission that we owe the honour of holding our meeting in this Chamber to-day and hereafter in the Royal Palace of St. James's. We are deeply sensible of these signal marks of Their Majesties' sympathy and favour. I am very conscious of the responsibility you have put upon me.

But the responsibility lies heavily on us all, for we are now at the very birth of new history. Declarations made by the British Sovereigns and statesmen from time to time, that Great Britain's work in India was to prepare for Self-Government have been plain. If some say that they have been applied with woeful tardiness, I reply that no permanent evolution has seemed to anyone going through it to be anything but tardy.

I am never disturbed by people who say that I have not fulfilled my pledges, provided I am fulfilling them. We have met to try to register by agreement a recognition of the fact that India has reached a distinctive point in her constitutional evolution. Whatever that agreement may be there will be, some who will say that it

is not good enough or that it goes too far. Let them say so. We must boldly come out and appeal to the intelligent and informed public opinion.

The men who co-operate are pioneers of progress. Civil disorder is the way of reaction. It destroys social mentality wherefrom all constitutional development derives its source and whereupon all stable internal administration is based.

The task ahead of us is beset with difficulties for a solution of which the past affords no ready-made guide. There are stubborn diversities of view still to be brought together and conflicting interests that have hitherto proved irreconcilable. Could any issues be more momentous? Could any be more enticing to men who love to make rough places smooth? We must bring to our task all the resources of mutual trust, practical sagacity and statesmanship which we can command.

This is not the time for reciting, to say nothing of prejudging, our problems. We shall meet them as we proceed. Let us face them as men determined to surmount them. Why not? What problems of growth and development in liberty and institution have our peoples not faced? And united we remain despite our diversities, because of our skill in harmonising the differences by a reasonable mutual accommodation. What better example could we have than the goodly array of distinguished Prime Ministers who have been with us consulting about dominion affairs?

His Majesty's presence at the opening of our deliberations has enabled us to understand both the strength and flexibility of the bond binding our whole Commonwealth of Nations together in loyalty and devotion to the Crown. The attendance of the representatives of the Dominion Governments is an earnest of the interest and

goodwill with which sister-states of the Commonwealth of Nations will follow our labours. The association of Princes for the first time in a joint conclave with representatives of the people of British India is symbolical of the gradual moulding together of India into one whole and, when I turn to the representatives of British India I am mindful of India's different communities, languages and interests, but I am reminded still more of the quickening and unifying influences which have grown irresistibly from her contact with Great Britain and of the aspirations for a United India which were in the minds of her philosophers and her rulers before the first English traders set foot on her shores.

Nor is it without significance that we who though not of India, also seek India's honour, are drawn from all the three parties in this Parliament and on the interplay of whose rivalries no less than ideals, is built up our British system of Government.

But, apart from these things, surely the simple fact that we have come here to sit at one table with the set and sole purpose of India's advancement within the companionship of the Commonwealth is in itself an undeniable sign of progress towards that end and also an inspiring challenge to reach an agreement.

We must now begin our labours. Things have been said in the past whether in anger or blindness or for mischief, which we had better forget at this table. Whatever be the story that is to be written of this Conference, be assured that it will be written. Let us strive to make it worthy of the best political genius of our peoples and add by it to the respect paid by the world to both our nations.

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## H. H. THE GAEKWAR OF BARODA

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The Gaekwar of Baroda voiced the sense of privilege in saying a few words on behalf of the Indian States delegation and said that they were deeply beholden to His Majesty, to whom he begged of the Premier to convey their sentiments of loyalty to his throne and person. He said: "These historic precincts have witnessed many conferences fraught with import, but I doubt if ever before they have been the scene of one like this when the issues at stake involve the prosperity and contentment of India's millions and greatness of the British Empire. By the concession in a generous measure of the aspirations of the Princes and peoples of India and by that alone can the realisation be given to the noble words of the great Queen Victoria as expressed in the famous proclamation namely, 'In their prosperity will be our strength, in their contentment our security and in their gratitude our best regard.' May we all labour whole-heartedly with mutual trust and goodwill for the attainment of so great an end."

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## THE MAHARAJA OF KASHMIR

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The Maharaja of Kashmir expressed deep gratitude for His Majesty's cordial welcome and prayed Providence to grant them the vision and will to realise the hopes expressed in the inspiring words of their beloved King Emperor. He drew attention to the unprecedented nature of the gathering and continued:—"Allied by treaty with the British Crown, and within our territories independent rulers, we have come with a full sense of the responsibility to our states and all India. As allies of Britain we stand solidly by the British connection. As Indians and loyal to the land of our birth, we stand as solidly as the rest of our countrymen for our lands the enjoyment of a position of honour and equality in the British Commonwealth. Our desire to co-operate to the best of our ability with all sections of the Conference is genuine as also is our determination to base our co-operation upon the realities of the present situation. Neither England nor India can afford to see this Conference end in failure. We must resolve to succeed. The difficulties shall not be insuperable. We must exercise patience, tact and forbearance and be inspired by mutual understanding and goodwill. We must give and take. If we succeed, England no less than India gains. If we fail India no less than England loses. The task is gigantic. In the case of no people would such aim as ours be easy to accomplish. In the case of India, the complexity of the factors is unique, but, by the grace of God, with goodwill and sympathy on both sides the difficulties shall be surmounted and with the words of the King-Emperor still ringing in our ears we Princes affirm that the Conference shall not fail through any fault of ours."

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## SIR AKBAR HYDARI

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Sir Akbar Hydari declared that His Majesty's address, full of personal sympathy to which every Indian heart immediately responded would prove an inspiration and guide to all of them. The Nizam counted "Faithful Ally of British Government" among the proudest of his titles. For 150 years the Nizams had held steadfastly to the "alliance in perpetuity" as the treaties proudly proclaimed it. "As with the Hyderabad so with all the States and I can assure the peoples of the Empire and the world at large that no hand shall sever the ties binding the Princes to the Crown. At the same time the States, autonomous within their own borders, can fully sympathise with the aims and ideals of the people of British India and be ready to work in harmony with them for a Greater United India, which we all hope will be the outcome of our deliberations. In this spirit we enter the Conference and shall do our utmost to assist in the solution of the problems to our country's satisfaction of her aspiration. Every race, creed and religion has its own distinct contribution to make to the Commonwealth and we of the States bring no mean inheritance, traditions and culture handed down from the spacious days when in politics, arts and science, India was amongst the foremost of the peoples of the world. We approach a task beset with so many difficulties in all humility, not trusting in our own power, but in the guiding hand of Divine Providence."

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## THE RT. HON. SRINIVASA SASTRI

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The gracious and inspiring words of His Majesty contain lessons which we must learn to practise if we would succeed in the enterprise about to begin, Sir, under your gracious and well proved guidance. The Crown is the symbol of both power and unity and draws our hearts in willing homage and reverence.

It is, moreover, the fountain of justice, freedom and equality among the various peoples of the Commonwealth and loyalty, therefore enjoins faithful and unceasing pursuit of these ideals and we should be failing in our duty to the Crown if we knowingly tolerated anywhere under the British flag conditions that produced injustice, inequality or undue restrictions on the growth of communities.

This Conference will enable all parties interested in India to bring together their ideas as the subjects of her contentment and peaceful advance to the fulfilment of her destiny. Bold and candid speech is required, but also moderation, forbearance and a readiness to appreciate different views. Above all a vision of India as a whole must be the sovereign consideration governing all our plans. You will hear, Sir, many claims and counsels. Some may be in mutual conflict. Our common prayer is that somehow through the magic of your personality these claims may be reconciled and these fragmentary counsels gathered into one complete scheme so that this table may be hereafter remembered as the table of rounded wisdom and statesmanship.

Through all clouds of prejudice and misunderstanding that have darkened the problem two statements of policy shine like bright guiding stars and both have the authority of His Majesty's Government. Firstly of the Viceroy last year to the effect that the natural issue of India's constitutional progress as contemplated in the declaration





## MR. MOHAMAD ALI JINNAH

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Mr. Jinnah acknowledged the sympathy and kindness of their Majesties and opined that it was fortunate that the statesman of Mr. MacDonald's calibre and experience had agreed to preside over the deliberations. He was glad that Mr. MacDonald had referred to the declarations of British sovereigns from time to time that Britain's work in India was to prepare her for Self-Government.

He drew attention to the Viceroy's recent announcement that the only issue implicit in the declaration of His Majesty's Government is the "attainment of Self-Government."

"But I must now emphasise that India expects the translation and fulfilment of these declarations. There never was a more momentous or graver issue in the history of the two nations than the present one on which hangs the fate of nearly one-fifth of the population of the world. We welcome the association of the Princes' Delegation with the representatives of the people of British India. I desire and hope that all parties, interests and communities will apply to the task (in the words of Mr. MacDonald) all resources of mutual trust, practical sagacity and statesmanship which we can command.

I must mark my pleasure at the presence of the Premiers and representatives of Dominions. I am glad they are here to witness the birth of a new Dominion of the British Commonwealth."

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## SECOND DAY, NOV. 17.

SIR TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU

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Mr. Prime Minister, the responsibility which has been cast upon my shoulders in presenting the case of my country to you is very great ; but I will beg some patience on your part, for the subject is great and complicated and involves many delicate issues affecting not only India but the relations of India to England. Let me tell you at the outset that we are here to add, if we can, a bright chapter to the history of the relations of England and India. (Applause.)

You and other British statesmen have in the long course of your political experience and duties, been accustomed to preside over, or be associated with, so many conferences of international character that it ill-becomes a humble politician like me from across the seas to tell you that so many hopes are wound up with the success of this conference. An anxious and restless India is watching you. May I also add that the eyes of the whole world are on you ? Not only are we Indians on our trial but if I may respectfully say so, and if I may beg you not to misunderstand me, the whole of British statesmanship is on trial.

This is absolutely the first time in the history of the connection of India and England that such a big gesture has been made by England towards India. It is a gesture which means that Indians and Englishmen should sit at a round table not to enter merely into a clash of ideas but

if possible to evolve a constitution for the country which may settle our difficulties for all time to come and which may enable us to settle down to constructive work.

I will ask you to bear with me when I remind you of the circumstances under which the Conference has been called. Last year, I believe, it was on the 31st October 1929, Lord Irwin, for whom let me tell you frankly, I have a genuine admiration (loud and prolonged applause)—a Viceroy who is very much misunderstood, to my surprise, in his country and, let me say, also in my country but whose heart is with us, I feel assured about it—made that famous announcement. 'The secret history as to how that announcement came to be made has yet to be written. But we must take that announcement as an accomplished fact. You pledged yourself there to certain ideas, to a certain policy and this Conference has been convened to implement that policy. In his speech which Lord Irwin delivered on July 9 last to the Indian Legislatures he again referred to that matter in these words, that the purpose of this Conference was 'that the spokesmen of Great Britain and India would take free counsel together upon measures which the Government would later present to Parliament'. And if I may be permitted to refer to the letter which Lord Irwin addressed to my distinguished friend Mr. Jayakar, and myself when we started on a mission which unfortunately failed, his Excellency wrote as follows: 'It remains my earnest desire as it is that of my Government and I have no doubt also that of His Majesty's Government to do anything we can in our respective spheres to assist the people of India to obtain as large a degree of the management of their own affairs as can be shown to be consistent with making provision for those matters in regard to which they are not at present in a position to assume

responsibility.' What those measures may be and what provisions may be made for them, will engage the attention of the Conference, but I have never believed that with mutual confidence on both sides it should be impossible to reach an agreement.

In that spirit and for that purpose, we have come here across the seas in the midst of the gibes and ridicule of our own countrymen. We have already been described in our country as traitors to the cause. We have come here in the midst of that opposition, but have brought with us the determination to argue with you, to discuss with you frankly and freely, to make our contribution to the solution of the problem, to make ourselves heard but also to hear you and to invite you to make your contribution, so that in the end we may say that those who have already forecast the future were really false prophets. In that spirit I wish to present my case before you.

No greater mistake can be made by British statesmen and my British friends—and I claim I do possess some friends among the British—than to imagine that India stands to-day where she did even ten years ago. I think the idea of the progress India has made during the last ten years could not have been better described than in the gracious words of our Sovereign on the opening day of this Conference. We have travelled a very long distance. Let that be realised. Let this time-worn theory, that we are only a handful of men be abolished for good. Mr. Jayakar and I, during the months of July, August and September, were constantly travelling from one end of the country to the other. We saw with our own eyes, we heard with our own ears, signs and cries which it would have been impossible for me or him to imagine. When I read in the English press descriptions of the situation in India, my heart sinks.

I am not making a reference to these things with the object of frightening you. I am not holding out any threat. I am simply stating facts. I make an absolutely honest confession that, so far as I am concerned, I have realised from the beginning the grave dangers of the civil disobedience movement in my country. But while I have realised the grave dangers of that movement, I have also realised the importance of placing a true interpretation of what it really represents. I beg you, on this occasion to rise superior to the small administrative view of this question and to take a broad statesmanlike view of the unrest you find in India. I beg you to think like this.

Never before in the history of India, never before even in the Moghul period has India been governed by agents and sub-agents. The Moghuls or Mahomedans may have come as invaders but they had settled down, became men of the same country and became part and parcel of our social system. What is the system that you have established? It is a system of the Parliamentary sovereignty, a sovereignty exercised by some 700 odd members of Parliament on behalf of a population of 45,000,000 and you are attempting to exercise that sovereignty over 320,000,000 people living 6,000 miles away from the centre of your political power. I speak with the utmost deference in the presence of the Secretary of State, but I do say that an ordinary member of the Parliament has neither the necessary time nor the necessary capacity nor the necessary vision to understand the mind or feelings of India. And if Mr. Benn will excuse me, I will say that the Secretary of State, however distinguished he may be, is one of those 700 men. Necessarily he has to depend upon the advice of men in the India Office. While I have great admiration for the Civil Service, whether it is your civil service or the

civil service of my country, I cannot forget that while the civil servants can be very good servants they are very bad masters. Therefore I say that ultimately it comes down, not to Parliamentary sovereignty, but to the sovereignty of half a dozen men in England and half a dozen men in India. That is how the theory of Parliamentary sovereignty works out. Can you expect a country like mine, brought into contact with Western ideas and vibrating with the new movement of the East, to remain content with that sort of government? Certainly not. It is perfectly natural that we should seek freedom within our own borders as an integral part of the British Commonwealth of Nations.

You will ask me, 'What is it exactly that you want?' When I have talked to my British friends—some of them are very highly placed statesmen—if I have used in the course of the conversation that forbidden phrase 'Dominion Status', some of them have asked me, 'What does it all mean?' I have been asked that question, in fact by one of your biggest statesmen in private. When we talk about Dominion Status, the average Englishman stands up in the middle of the road and asks, 'What does it all mean?' I would respectfully ask whether, in 1865, when you had to tackle the question of Canada or, in 1900, when you had to tackle the problem of Australia or, in 1909, when you were face to face with the problem of South Africa after that terrible war—whether the average Englishman stood up and asked, 'What does it all mean?'

When you ask what are the implications of Dominion Status, I am ready to give an answer to that question, but let me tell you what we want before I proceed further avoiding that expression which is unpleasant to some ears. I will put my case like this: India wants, and is determined to achieve, a status of equality with the other free

members of the British Commonwealth, an equality which will give it a government not merely responsive to but responsible to the popular voice. Speaking for myself, I say with all conviction—I possess conviction based not merely on theory but on experience derived, if I may respectfully say so, from my official experience, however brief it may be—that it will not do for you to take provincial autonomy or anything of that kind, unless you couple with it a decided and clear change in the constitution of the Central Government. You must make that responsible to the legislature.

At this stage you may ask me, assuming that India wants a responsible central government, what is going to be the relation of that responsible central government to the provinces, and what is going to be the relation of responsible central government to the States? That at once gives rise to the question whether our constitution should be of a federal character. Before I express any views, may I make a very respectful appeal to some of my illustrious countrymen, who are patriots first and princes afterwards. It will not do for their Highnesses, and I know they are far from conceiving such a thing, to say that they are here only for the protection of their rights. Let me respectfully tell them that they are Indians first and Indian princes next, and that they owe as much duty to the common Motherland as we do. I am not one of those who have a horror of Indian princes. I make that confession publicly. I think of the Indian princes every inch as patriotic as any one of us and I make an earnest appeal to them not to confine their vision merely to what is called one-third India, I ask them to say whether at any time in history India was so arbitrarily divided as it is now geographically British India or Indian India. I say we are *one* India. I leave

it to them to move forward with the vision of an India which will be one single whole, each part of which may be autonomous and may 'enjoy absolute independence within its own borders, regulated by proper relations with the rest. I, therefore, ask them to come forth on this occasion and say whether they are prepared to join an all-India federation. I express no definite opinion. I will not commit this Conference to any particular issue on this point. These issues have to be examined carefully and minutely. I do suggest, however, so far as we are concerned, that we have the vision of a united India and not 'merely India divided into so many compartments. I have no doubt that when the Maharaja of Bikaner addresses the Conference, he will advert to these questions and will take us now into his confidence.

If you agree that there has got to be responsibility at the centre, inevitably you must ask yourself the question, unitary or federal? Speaking for myself, and I speak in regard to this matter in my individual capacity, I am a very strong believer in the federal form of government. I believe therein lies the solution of the difficulty and the salvation of India.

And if I were to express my opinion freely, I would welcome the association of Indian States with British India mainly for three reasons. I say they will furnish a stabilising factor in our constitution. Further I say that the process of unification will begin at once. Lastly, I say that in regard to matters of defence they will furnish a practical experience which is yet wanting in British India. For all these reasons I invite them to join this bigger federation. The details have to be worked out. They were not present to the mind of the Government of India when they wrote their despatch. The Government of India in their des-



patch vaguely speak of a far-off distant federation. With us, it is a real and live issue now. If we can come to some solution of that, I frankly think that nothing better can be achieved at this Conference.

Having said that much, I will revert to the question of the form of government. I may be reminded by some friends here that absolutely unrestricted responsible government at the centre is at the present moment an impossibility. I may be reminded that there is the question of law and order involved. I may be reminded that there are European interests involved. There is the entire system of commerce involved. There is finance, which is the basis of all constitution, involved. My answer is this: If these are the difficulties, by all means face them and find a solution for them. But you ought not, you cannot, treat them as insurmountable difficulties which make it imperative on you to say, "no, Gentlemen, we shall not admit your claim to responsibility in the centre, because these are the difficulties for which our combined statesmanship is unable to find any solution." I do not want my friends of the British Delegation to take that position.

No one can be more interested in the maintenance of law and order than we Indians. I admit there may be difficulties, but what has been your history during the last 25 years ever since the Partition of Bengal? Every five years there has sprung up an agitation of an acute character and we had—I mean Europeans and Indians have had—either to resort to extraordinary powers or shut up thousands of men and put up with grave breaches of law. Is this what you call maintenance of law and order? Surely no Indian Minister could have made graver blunders than have been made in dealing with a situation of this character. I do say, that is the position which has got to be

fairly faced, and you will never be able to maintain law and order so long as you do not satisfy the political aspirations, so long as the question of the minorities is not settled, so long as the untouchables and the depressed classes do not feel that they have a definite position of honourable equality. Solve these problems and then the whole problem of law and order becomes very much simpler.

I now come to commerce. What is the trouble about commerce? I am quite aware that there is a very large amount of European capital invested in India, but I am not one of those, and I believe there is not a single man here, who would like to have any expropriatory legislation. We do not want to rob the Europeans of their capital. On the contrary we are most anxious that our friends the Europeans who have settled down in India or who carry on business there should feel that they have the same rights and privileges which genuine born Indians have. They are quite welcome to suggest any safeguards for their rights and interests. We shall be more than willing to meet them.

You talk of finance as being an obstacle and of the absence of a Reserve Bank. My answer to that is, by all means establish a Reserve Bank based not on a political but purely financial and economic basis. When we know that the constitution is going to be ours, that the government is going to be ours, why should we adopt a non-possumus attitude? There is not very much force in the argument that the credit of India will disappear in the London market, if finance comes into Indian hands. I know instances in which private individuals have raised money in London. I know that your country has advanced big loans to small countries which are not within your Empire. Surely, after 150 years of association with Great Britain, after

having enjoyed a system of government which has importance, and established stability in the country, do you mean to say that the credit of India in the London market will disappear simply because our finances pass into other hands. Did you ever raise this question in the case of other countries? I, therefore, ask you, if you feel there is any real and genuine difficulty with regard to these matters, please do not use them as obstacles in our way but as difficulties to be surmounted.

I now come to the question of Army. May I remind you of a very striking speech of the late Mr. Montagu, for whom everyone of us here has not merely respect but deep genuine affection, in which he said :—‘Having kept Indians out of the commissioned ranks for 70 or 80 years, having deprived them of the opportunity to build up their own army and receive training, does it in fairness lie in your mouth to say now: “Oh India must not get self-government because it cannot defend its own borders and it cannot maintain its own peace”. The argument is neither fair nor, from a practical point of view, can it be maintained. As practical politicians, we realise that there is difficulty about the Army. We realise we have got to train a sufficient number of our own men and we have to be patient about that. But all we say is, give us the opportunity to train our own men. Give us freedom to establish institutions. So far as your Army is concerned by all means keep it in the hands of the Viceroy. Let him exercise control over the Army through the Commander-in-Chief or through a Minister whom he may appoint and we, for our part are willing to provide funds and agree to statutory changes in respect of the Army. These are matters which have got to be finally adjusted and examined.

I have been told privately, and I have read it in documents—and it causes me some despair—that no British Minister will agree to the transfer of the British Army to the control of Indian Ministers. That question, to my mind, is not of immediate importance, but I do hope people who talk like that do not mean to imply that no British officer will be willing to serve under any Indian fellow-subject. At the present moment it so happens and it has happened repeatedly during the last few years, that Indians hold the highest offices under the Crown and I have not yet known a single instance in which a member of the Indian Civil Service or any other service had declined to take orders from his Indian superior on the ground that he is an Indian. I appeal to my late chief, Lord Reading. I had the honour at one time to be a member of his government and I appeal to him to say whether the relations between the European members of the Executive Council and Indian members on the one hand and between the Indian members of the Executive Council and the secretaries most of whom were members of the Indian Civil Service were cordial or otherwise. I should like to refer to a remarkable case which exists in India at the present moment. In Lahore, the Chief Justice of the High Court happens to be a distinguished countryman of mine Sir Shadi Lall, one of the most striking personalities of India. I have never heard a single judge of the High Court say that he feels it a matter of disgrace that he should be presided over by an Indian Chief Justice. I say therefore, let us put it : After all, the point of view we take is this : You and we are subjects of the same King-Emperor, you and we belong to the same Commonwealth of Nations. There ought not to be any feeling of superiority or inferiority,

because so long as there is that feeling of superiority and inferiority, India can never be happy and can never be contented. (Applause.) Let us deal with the problem of the Army, therefore, in the manner in which practical statesmanship requires it to be done, but do not say to us that because of these obstacles we ought to go back to our own countrymen and say: the utmost that we have been able to achieve by going 6,000 miles and by talking to British statesmen of all the three parties is provincial autonomy.

Let me ask you only one thing. I would make a personal appeal to Lord Reading in this matter, because I believe that if there is one man in this assembly who understands the constitution of India from the legal and political point of view, it is Lord Reading. I would ask him to consider this. Do you really think that it will make for peace and harmonious action if you give the provinces provincial autonomy, which means responsible government, and on the top of that have an irresponsible central government? Quite apart from questions of a political character I say that the machinery will break down in the course of a week. It will give rise to so many deadlocks, it will cause so many occasions of friction that the machinery will break down. The position, therefore, is plain and simple. Take your courage in your hands, provide as many safeguards as you can so long as those safeguards do not destroy the vital principle. Then go ahead with courage and with faith. Courage and faith together with the commonsense of the people of India will come to your rescue. Their whole future is at stake. But do not say: You shall march so many paces.' The time has long since passed by when India could hold its soul in patience and march to that far-off ideal through the ages.

I very respectfully beg you to change your outlook on the whole situation.

Mr. Prime Minister, I have already taken much more time than I intended. But before I resume my seat I should like to express the hope that you and we may work in the closest possible co-operation and that we may speak without mental reservations, because I believe there can be no greater crime against England or India than to speak with mental reservation on an occasion like this. I hope you and we may succeed in evolving a constitution which will bring peace and contentment in my country, which will make the youth of my country look to their country with pride, with confidence and with assurance and which will make your office and your name immortal in the history of India and England.

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## H. H. THE MAHARAJA OF BIKANER

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We meet in no ordinary times to attempt no ordinary task. In our immediate concern is the peace, happiness and good Government of 319 millions of people, looking to whatever Government may be established for some relief from their present distresses; and who, I venture once again to assert, certain unhappy circumstances notwithstanding, are loyal to the core.

What, then, would be the result, if from any irresolution on our part, from unreason on one side or re-action on the other, from timidity in one party and a refusal to recognise the essentials of constitutional Government in another, we flinched from the work and failed in our duty to secure the greater contentment of India?

It goes without saying that a very heavy responsibility rests on each and every one of us taking part in this Conference, and that the issues involved are really tremendous. It is impossible to minimise the magnitude of the task that lies before us, nor do I desire to underrate the complexity of some of the problems involved. I am an optimist, but there is no use in shutting one's eyes to facts. I have seen in Bombay and elsewhere during my travels in British India how the masses in the districts are being affected; and I wish I could adequately express the gravity of the situation.

I have always declined to be moved by threats of dire consequences, nor have I submitted to being dictated to at the muzzle of the pistol; but undue regard for preconceived ideas and false notions of prestige, or exaggerated fears of some possible consequences, have, I feel it will be agreed,

also, to be guarded against. I for one—and here I feel that I speak for my Order as well as for the representatives of British India who are gathered in this ancient hall—refuse to be made fearful by the difficulties ahead (applause). Rather do I find in them an inspiration to put forth the uttermost that is in me in a spirit of confidence and of courage. The very immensity of the work makes it worth doing well. His Majesty the King-Emperor, at the opening of this conference, was pleased to remind us that the last decade had witnessed a quickening and growth in the ideals and aspirations of nationhood, which defy the customary measurements of time.

I venture to appeal to you, Mr. Prime Minister, as well as to the other members of His Majesty's Government and to our colleagues here representing the British political parties, to take your courage in both hands, to throw your hearts over the fence and to follow boldly after, in the conviction that the greater our vision and determination, the greater is our success likely to be and the richer in consequence the harvest which we all—British India, the Indian States, Great Britain and the Empire—shall reap.

The ultimate attainment of Dominion Status under the Crown is inherent in the declaration of policy of 1917, and has more recently received an authoritative endorsement. Let us hitch our wagon to that star, fully realising that our sister States did not reach the end at one stride, but after evolution based on experience, and that in the intervening stage, certain safeguards and guarantees are imperatively necessary for the security of the body politic and all the parts thereof, but looking straight ahead nothing worth having can be attained without facing some risks.

That was when Lord Durham laid the foundation for the proud position which Canada enjoys to-day as



the premier Dominion in our great Commonwealth. Similar reasons were given, when Sir Henry Campbell Bannerman secured Dominion Status for South Africa with the best results. I am equally convinced that if this Conference will do the right thing, my country will be a willing and contented partner in the Commonwealth. She will then be only too glad, side by side with an honourable and independent position internally, to have all the powers and resources of our mighty Empire always at her back.

No half-hearted measures and no tinkering with the constitution, will, I beg you to believe, meet the situation. Many of our troubles in the past and our troubles of the present have arisen from these causes. Moreover, when any responsible demand for some constitutional advance was made it was often too late.

There never was a time in the history of the world and of the Empire, when courage—courage in thought, in aim, in constructive statesmanship—was more needed than now, when the great ambitions stirring in India are struggling for constitutional expression. It is in this spirit of courage, of confident imagination and of liberal statesmanship that I pray we may approach this great task. I speak primarily for myself, though I believe I shall have general agreement from the Princes and those representing our Indian States. We are here specially to present the policy of the Indian States. First and foremost, there is an unflinching loyalty to the throne and person of his Majesty, the King Emperor of India. With the traditions of centuries of kingship and with the instincts of hereditary rule ingrained in our being, the kingly idea and the monarchical system are bone of our bones, flesh of our flesh. Even if we were tempted to weaken from this principle, which is impossible to contemplate, the intense

devotion of the Imperial House of Windsor to the interest of India would rekindle our faith.

Three notable and encouraging messages from His Imperial Majesty still ring in our ears. They are the plea for sympathy in dealing with India, made on the conclusion of his Indian tour, when Prince of Wales, twenty-five years ago, the watchword of hope six years later at Calcutta, and the pledge that the princes' privileges and rights were inviolate and inviolable when the Chamber of Princes was inaugurated some nine years ago. With those three messages the spirit of sympathy, hope and justice, encouraged by the gracious words addressed to this Conference when it was inaugurated on Wednesday, we come with greater optimism to the work that lies before us.

Linked with this devotion to the Crown is an unfaltering adherence to the British Commonwealth of Nations. The old idea of Empire as signifying "Dominion over palm and pine" is finished. The concept of Empire as overlordship based on force was never true, and indeed has not even the frail shadow of reality. The unity of the Empire was signally vindicated in the Great War. The basis of that unity was re-established at the Imperial Conference of 1926, when it was declared that the constituent states are autonomous communities within the British Empire, equal in status, in no way subordinate one to another, in any aspect of their domestic or internal affairs though united by common allegiance to the Crown. Our attachment to the Empire, or Commonwealth—call it what you may,—is no more a matter of sentiment. It is based on the profound conviction that, not only can each constituent state reach its full expression within this bond and under the Crown, but a higher development, politically and

economically, than it could attain as an isolated independent unit.

Thirdly we stand for the terms of our treaty rights and all that they involve. Those treaties are with the British Crown and obviously cannot be transferred to any other authority without our free agreement and assent. But do not conclude, I pray, from this that I am one of those people who think things never change. The States really maintain that treaties, concluded in honour and friendship are binding, until they be amended and they can only be amended by negotiations and settlement on both sides. Nor must it be concluded that we of the Indian States are under the belief that changes in British India will have no reflex action on ourselves and on our relations with our own subjects. The territories of the Indian states are interwoven with British India, the enterprise of our traders and the business of the new commercial classes have so grown up with the opening of the Suez Canal that we must be influenced by the development of political ideas and institutions beyond our frontiers. We know our States and our subjects. We live amongst our own folk and are in the most intimate contact with the people. We shall know how and when to adjust our system to any changed conditions but we will do so in our own time and in our own way free from all external interference.

Is there anything in adherence to those principles either opposed to, or inconsistent with, the fullest development of India, until she takes her equal place as a constituent state in the British Commonwealth with the other Dominions welded into an indivisible whole under the regis of the Crown? I say no, a thousand times no.

It is sometimes said that there are two Indias—British India and the India under the rule of her own Princes. That is true in a political sense, but India is a single geographical unit and we are all members one of another. We, the Princes, are Indians, we have our roots deep down in her histories past and we are racy of the soil. Everything which tends to the honour and prosperity of India is for us a vital concern. Everything which retards her prosperity and shakes the stability of her constitution retards our own growth. We claim that we are on the side of progress.

One of the most welcome signs of the times is the material weakening of the idea that the Princes are opposed to the political growth of British India, and would range themselves or allow themselves to be ranged, against the realization of the just hopes of their fellow countrymen in British India. We have, therefore, watched with the most sympathetic interest the rise of that passion for an equal position in the eyes of the world, expressed in the desire for Dominion Status, which is the dominant force among all thinking Indians to-day. Those of us who have grown grey in the responsibilities of rule and in the practical work of administration—and thirty two years have passed, since I assumed the active government of the State of Bikaner—deplore some of the expressions of this urge. We appreciate the fact that when contracts are broken under the impulse of revolutionary fervour they have to be re-knit in blood and tears and that a weary path of suffering and loss has to be trodden before society marches forward again. But, behind these untoward developments, which we hope and pray are only a passing phase, lies the struggle for equality springing from our ancient culture and quickened by years of contact with

the liberty-loving and constitutionally-minded British people. (Applause.)

It is, I submit, our duty to bend our energy to the task of satisfying the righteous demands without impairing the majestic fabric of law. How best can this be achieved? My own conviction is that, if we are to build well and truly, we must recognise that, associated with its geographical unity, India is a land of some diversity. Our starting point, therefore, must be sought, not in the dead land of an impossible uniformity, but in an associated diversity. (Hear, hear). For these reasons, the establishment of a unitary State, with a sovereign parliament sitting at Delhi, to which the whole people would look, in small things as in large, is to my mind impossible. There would be no room in such a constitution for the Indian States. Moreover, such a Government would crack under its own ponderability. Would it not mean the harnessing of the most advanced to the chariot wheels of the least developed, and a slowing down of the general tide of progress?

We of the Indian States are willing to take our part in and to make our contribution to the greater prosperity and contentment of India as a whole. I am convinced that we can best make that contribution through a federal system of government, composed of the States and British India.

These two partners are of different status. The Indian States are already sovereigns and autonomous as of right, having the honour of being linked with the Crown by means of treaties of perpetual alliance and friendship and unity of interests. British India derives, whatever measure of authority it may possess by devolution, but it will not be beyond the wealth of experience available at the table to devise a means of linking these differing units into powerful federal administration.

As to the question whether, if a federal government is devised for India, the Princes and States will enter into association with it, the final answer must obviously depend on the structure of the Government indicated, and on the other points involved, such for instance, as certain necessary safeguards, constitutional and fiscal, for the preservation of the rights and interests of the States and their subjects.

Federalism is an elastic term. There are several forms of federal government.

Conditions in India are unique. We have no historical precedence to guide us, and the position of the Indian States is, I believe, absolutely without parallel. All these, and many other great questions of policy and of detail, have to be examined and defined and settled first in Committee and in informal discussions, but speaking broadly the Princes and States realise that All-India Federation is likely to prove the only satisfactory solution of India's problems. (Applause.)

A federation on the lines I have attempted to sketch on other occasions, has, as I have previously stated, no terrors for the Princes and Governments of Indian States. We, however, recognise that a period of transition will necessarily intervene before the Federal Government is fully constituted, and that Federation cannot be achieved by coercion of the States in any form, that the Indian Princes will only come into the Federation of their own free will and on terms which will secure the just rights of their States and subjects.

I would not venture on the impertinence of even suggesting what course is best for British India. As we demand freedom from interference in our own affairs, equally we shall refrain from thrusting our oars into matters which are not our direct concern. The arrangements

between the Central and Provincial Governments in British India are matters primarily outside the purview of the Indian States. If our co-operation is sought, it will, I am sure, be gladly and freely and honestly given. Our duty is to contribute, so far as we can, to the evolution of a system of Government, which will lead to the close and effective association of the Indian States with British India, whose constitution is to be hammered out here.

At the same time, the rights in certain directions of the Rulers of the Indian States, arising from their Treaties require to be more precisely defined. The Princes and States naturally want to know where they stand. However sincerely desirous of making their contribution to a happy settlement, they will obviously find it difficult to enter into new bonds so long as their rights are left tottering on the shifting sands of expediency deemed paramount at the moment.

I think I can best elucidate what is referred to by quoting from a speech which I made in the Chamber of Princes on behalf of my Order on the 27th February last —

New fangled theories about the ultimate powers regarding paramountcy, and such matters, before the appointment of the Butler Committee, and extravagant and exaggerated Imperialist claims, inconsistent with the plighted word and good faith of Great Britain or sound statesmanship advanced on behalf of the Paramount Power,—claims more wide, very frequently more insistent and, I respectfully submit, based on varied and not infrequently untenable grounds, and opposed to constitutional and historical facts and to the provisions of our treaties and other engagements, and in direct contradiction to the solemn and sincere pledges and assurances in the famous gracious proclamation of Queen Victoria, repeatedly reiterated and re-affirmed by successive British Sovereigns in numerous proclamations, have not helped to ease the situation or to allay the anxieties of the States of their rulers, governments and people.

The Princes and States, fortified by the legal opinion obtained from some of the most eminent counsel in Great Britain have found themselves unable particularly to accept such claims on the principles enunciated in this connection by the Indian States Committee, and have already taken up the matter with the Viceroy and the British Government.

Starting with the basic recognition that our Treaty rights exist and must be respected, that they are with the Crown and cannot be transferred to any other authority without our agreement and that they can be modified only with our free assent, three developments of the existing administrative machinery are essential for the smooth working of the new system, and, indeed, of any system. It is an open matter of complaint that our Treaty rights have been infringed. I need not stress this point, for it has been publicly admitted by no less an authority than the Viceroy and Governor-General of India, that the Treaty rights of the States have been encroached upon, and that, in some cases, an arbitrary body of usage and political practice has come into being. The time has passed when issues of this importance can be decided ex-parte by any Government.

We therefore attach the utmost importance to the establishment of a Supreme Court, with full powers to entertain and adjudicate upon all disputes of a justifiable nature as to our rights and obligations guaranteed under our Treaties.

This is another point which I need not labour, for it is a principle of which the leaders of political thought in British India have, I believe, I am right in saying, lent their full support.

Next we claim that in the questions, which arise concerning the purely internal affairs of the States, their case



should not go by default. That will be of still greater importance in the future. The King's Viceregent in India is even now burdened with many and grievous responsibilities, which will be weighted under the new system of Government; and here I would once again like to be associated in a respectful tribute and to express our deep admiration and gratitude for that great Viceroy, Lord Irwin. We think that it will be impossible for any man, however able, amid these grave pre-occupations to give adequate personal attention to those questions affecting the States which come up for day to day decision, and for which he will be directly responsible to the Crown.

For those reasons some of us press for the appointment of an Indian States' Council, to work with the Political Secretary and to advise the Viceroy of the day. Thirdly there will be the need for the classification of those administrative questions which are of common concern to British India and the Indian States. This classification will require the previous consent of the States. \* \* \*

Before I sit down, may I ask forgiveness, if as an old soldier, I have unwittingly given offence to anyone by any bluntness of speech. I am inspired by one thought—service to my beloved King-Emperor and devotion to my Motherland. Akbar, the greatest of the Moghuls, when he set out on the crowning adventure of his crowded life placed his foot in the stirrup of opportunity and his hands on the reins of confidence in God. I would commend to you on the threshold of our great enterprise—the conquest of anarchy and reaction in Hindustan and the assurance of her contentment and prosperity as a co-equal partner in our great Commonwealth—the words of Abraham Lincoln in circumstances not altogether remote from these:—

“With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work that we are in.”

## MR M. R. JAYAKAR

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I did not expect to be called upon at such an early stage of the debate, and I was under the impression that, representing, as I do, the younger generation, I was to be the last of the three speakers on behalf of the British Indian Delegation. However, Sir, as you have commanded me to speak at this stage, I shall accept your invitation in the sense that I shall put before you a few sentiments from the point of view of the younger men in India, who are looking on the Round Table Conference.

You have been told by my esteemed friend, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, under what circumstances the Round Table Conference has been convened. I remember the debate in the Legislative Assembly in 1924, when the most important political party in India, over which our esteemed friend, Pandit Motilal Nehru, presided, passed a resolution—in 1924 and 1925—two successive years—desiring and calling the attention of the British statesmen to the desirability of holding a Round Table Conference. That was in the year 1924 and 1925, and it was a surprise to British statesmanship that the very men who then desired the holding of a Round Table Conference are to-day averse to attending the session of that Round Table Conference.

To me it is no wonder, and it is one instance of what an esteemed countryman of mine the late Mr. Gokhale said, many years ago, very pithily. "On all the portals of the Government of India," he said, "is written in large letters the words 'Too late'." What would have satisfied India in the year 1924 is not satisfying India to-day, and,

if I may say so, what will satisfy India to-day, will not satisfy India a year hence.

That is the lesson that I wish to put before this assembly, august as it is; and I can say with perfect confidence that we must proceed to our work, because time is, as the lawyers say, "of the essence of the contract," and I repeat, without giving it as a threat, the sentiment that time is of the utmost importance, because if India gets to-day what she wants, she will be satisfied with many things which will not satisfy her six months hence.

Sir, I come from a Province where, as possibly you have heard, the greatest activity of the Congress is going on. I have seen many things, which very few have been privileged to see in the course of their political experience.

I say with great confidence that the choice before your Government in India is a choice between constitutional Government and chaos and disorder. How you will accept this choice, it is for you to decide, but it is my duty to place before you the extreme gravity of the situation in India. As Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru has stated, to-day we are standing on the threshold of great events in India. Whether you make them great in the constitutional field, or whether you make them great in the field of revolution and anarchy, it is for this Conference to decide. I can only say that great events are going to take place in India, whether they are great in the field of responsibility, constructive work and comradeship, or whether they are great in the field of opposition, bitterness, hatred and anarchy—and that will depend very largely upon what we achieve at this Round Table Conference.

Since coming here, I have had frequent talks with friends. I used to be a student in this city many years ago, and I still retain most pleasant impressions of my days as

a pupil in the rooms of one of your foremost Judges in the Court of Appeal to-day. I carried back with me 25 years ago pleasant memories of my experiences as a pupil sitting cheek by jowl with my English friends, one or two of whom have since become great Judges of your Courts. A few have died. One or two have become eminent King's Counsels, and others have become great Englishmen. I therefore claim to have a few friends in England, and talking with them, I have discovered that the chief obstacles to India getting Dominion Status can be put into three categories. I have met friends who say, "How can India have Dominion Status, when she talks of severance with the Empire, and claims independence?" Many of my English friends have spoken of their fears as follows: "If we give you the first instalment of Reforms, namely, Dominion Status, you will make it a most powerful lever for severance from the Empire—the cry of independence." I do not know whether there are any friends on the opposite side, in whose minds this threat is in operation. I can only say, knowing as I do, my Congress friends intimately, (and I was in contact with them only three months ago), that if you give India Dominion Status to-day in the course of a few months, the cry of independence will die of itself. If, on the other hand, we return empty handed from our labours in this Conference, it will be the surest way of raising, in volume and in intensity, this cry of independence.

I say, without any disrespect to my friends in India, that the cry of independence is a cry of despair, distrust and suspicion. It is a cry emanating from those who have convinced themselves, by reason of their past experience that England does not mean to fulfil her promises to India. We have had several promises time after time. Only to take a recent experience, this time last year there was the

Viceroy's great declaration. I was then in Bombay. It created very great enthusiasm. The idea of meeting British representatives face to face always appeals to a lawyer, as I am. There is a great fascination to a man bred in the law, as I am, to come in contact with men and to discuss face to face with them controversies. As I say, the Viceroy's declaration at that time created great enthusiasm in the city to which I belong, but unfortunately one damper after another came on that enthusiasm. Many of my political friends wanted to know the purpose for which this Round Table Conference was called. The great Viceroy, whose name we will always cherish, found himself in great difficulty. He said, "I am not at liberty to mention what is the purpose of this Round Table Conference. Go to the Round Table Conference, face the members and ask them to define the purpose of their labours by being present at the Round Table Conference." I am an old cricketer. I believe in playing the game. I have, therefore, accepted the invitation, and I have come here; but I would emphasise that, before we proceed with our labours, it is necessary for us to decide that India might feel satisfied as to what is the purpose of the Round Table Conference. If I may say so in all humility, the purpose is to make it possible for India to enter the British Commonwealth. If that is done to-day and I am sure my friends on my right agree—you will kill the cry for independence at once. That is a cry in which, in the language of the bargainer, you ask for 16 annas in order that 14 annas may come to you. All businessmen know that cry. The cry of independence is proceeding from those who either do not believe that England wishes to give India Dominion Status, or who very tactfully want independence in order that Dominion Status might come.

The second obstacle which has been put before me by my friends in England is the Army : how can Indians manage the Army ? As Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru mentioned in his memorable words, we are quite agreeable to listen to any safeguards that may be suggested during the period of transition, in order that transition may be made more easy and more safe for both sides.

I am surprised that this talk about the Army arises in connection with a country, in which there is all the fighting material for which one could wish. My Mohammedan friends, the Indian States, my own community of the Mahrattas and the Sikhs are all fighting people. India is a country which possesses traditional fighting talent, which has continued over centuries, and which is quite capable of furnishing the Empire, if ever the time comes, with all the fighting material she may want. You talk of India as wanting in fighting talent—as wanting fighting talent even in defending herself. I am surprised that such talk should take place.

It reminds me of a little episode which happened when Mr. Gokhale came here for a great Coronation, and which he was never tired of reciting to me. He was taken to one of your beautiful parks to see a review of the Sikh and Mahratta soldiers—and beautiful, tall and stalwart men they were. They marched past to the admiration of all the Englishmen and women present and they were clapped. Mr. Gokhale refused to clap. An English friend standing near said, “Why don’t you clap ?” Mr. Gokhale replied, “I reserve my clapping for that mighty people who have turned these soldiers into their higher links.” That is the sentiment of the younger men in the country. There is splendid material in the land which you could harness, if

you could only instil a little sentiment, patriotism, courage and self-government, if I may say so, into their midst.

The third difficulty which was mentioned to me was 'You are so divided amongst yourself. You have your minorities—Hindus, Moslems, the depressed classes, the Brahmins and the Non-brahmins.' With regard to that, I wish to mention one circumstance. I do not know whether my English friends will appreciate it, because possibly you have no minorities problem among you. Certainly you have not had that problem within the last 30 or 40 years. My solution of this minorities question is this: give them opportunities of common endeavour for their country, and then much of this minorities difficulties will disappear.

Give them opportunities of feeling that, side by side, they are working for their one country, that they have a common patriotism, for which they can all work together. Do that, and a great deal of the difficulty will disappear. That is my solution, and the reason why I suggest it is this. Under the present system of Government, we very rarely get any chances of working together in the sense of working for our common country. Create that feeling. It can be created only by giving India complete freedom in the form of Dominion Status. Harness all these minorities together, and I have no doubt that a great deal of the discontent, which arises at present, will disappear. That is the solution for the question of minorities.

Lastly I come to an obstacle which has been mentioned to me. It is said, "Suppose India is given Dominion Status; what about the Indian States? Do they feel like you? Are they prepared to come into a Federation? Are they patriotic? Do they feel that they are Indians? The

answer to that has just been given by the noble scion of the House of Bikaner, who spoke before me. As Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru rightly remarked, the Indian Princes are first Indians and then Princes. Our deliberations, during the next few days, will make it perfectly clear that a common patriotism actuates them, as it actuates British Indians.

Let me say, on behalf of the young India to which I belong, and speaking for those whom I represent, that we are quite ready to do this in order to create a foothold for the Indian States: we will not insist on impossible terms of federation. I do not wish to go into the vexed question of federation or a unitary form of Government; although that question has been stated as the subject-matter of discussion, you, Sir, have very wisely ruled that we may speak on any constitutional question. I do not wish to go into the question of federation or a unitary form of Government, because that is for the experts to decide in committee.

I can only say, speaking for those whom I represent in this Conference, and speaking with great confidence and assurance, that we will not insist on impossible terms of federation so far as the Indian States are concerned. We shall insist on such terms as most of the Indian States are prepared to accept at present. We have no desire, if I may speak for the younger men, to interfere at all in the internal affairs of the Indian States; we are quite prepared to wait, until they of themselves come into line with our ways.

I remember a characteristic paragraph in that memorable Montagu-Chelmsford Report, as we called it in India, where ten years ago this problem was anticipated and in a memorable paragraph, almost poetic like an epic, the authors of that Report stated what is eternally found true and what has certainly been found true in India. They



said that, when you approach these processes of reformation in one part of India, you cannot have any barriers or frontiers beyond which it will not go. Create these forces of reformation, set these processes to work, and the Indian States will not remain immune from their progress for a long time.

It is impossible to conceive of a free British India without conceiving of free Indian States in the course of the next ten, fifteen or twenty years. We are content to wait, so that these slow processes may operate, and so that in the course of time His Highness the Maharaja of Bikaner can think of an assembly in his own territory and of handing over responsibility to his own subjects. That is a question of time. We are a very patient set of politicians in British India, and we are content to wait.

We shall therefore not insist on impossible terms, and all that we say to the Indian States is this, "There are concerns of a common character; sit along side us and thrash them out. We have nothing to do with your internal affairs."

If they will accept a supreme tribunal, a supreme court of justice, and if all matters which are in dispute between the Indian States and British India can be referred to this supreme court of justice (over which I hope in course of time a man of the eminence and erudition of Lord Sankey will preside), as long as the Indian States agree to this mode of arbitrament between themselves and British India and say "we voluntarily submit to the jurisdiction of this tribunal"—by what name it is called is immaterial—as soon as that is admitted then, to a politician of my mind, the question is solved. I will therefore not insist on tinkering with their own internal administration; I leave that to the processes of time, and

I have no doubt that in the course of time, when the rest of India is progressive, is free, is democratic, and has notions of right and wrong based on human dignity and personal rights, the same processes will, in the course of time, go beyond the frontiers of the British India, because these processes recognise no frontiers and admit no barriers.

This is an invitation which I am privileged to make to the States and let me give them an assurance that so far as we are concerned, we will raise no obstacles. I wish to give a similar assurance to those friends in front of me who represent British interests in India. I am aware, Sir, that a great many commercial interests are at stake in British India. I have a few friends in commercial circles who have invested millions and millions of rupees in British trade. There is no desire at all that there should be any kind of inroad upon the vested rights of the commercial people at all. All that they wish to do they can do as citizens of India. We may include them in a definition of the law so that they become domiciled Indians. That is a matter merely of phrasing, a matter of definition. But I can assure them that we are quite willing to sit down and accept safeguards which will give them an equal chance with British Indians.

Let me, however, give them one warning that they will not enjoy the monopoly they have enjoyed, so far as it was enjoyed, on the simple ground that in their skin there is less pigment than in mine. Monopolies they have enjoyed on the ground they will find very difficult to maintain, but any other rights they have as citizens of India will remain. We are quite prepared to accept any safeguards, and I think there is enough intelligence in this gathering to devise safeguards to protect all legitimate interests.

I say that England's main interests in India is commercial. I think there are five hundred or one thousand families who send their younger sons to India to make a career for themselves, but that is a problem affecting only a few families. The problem of the ordinary man in dealing with India is mainly commercial. If you exclude these families to whom I have alluded, who are only a handful compared with the rest of the population, then I say your main problem in India is commercial. You want your productions to be sold in the country, and the consuming power of 330 million people is a powerful asset in our hands. It is a country in which your products can be sold. You have just ended a conference at which Imperial Preference was discussed. May I say that I believe that, from the point of view of the commercial man, a contented community is a much better customer than a discontented one? Already, your trade is in great jeopardy. In one city, there are British goods worth five crores lying in the warehouses. Those goods cannot be moved, much less sold. Do you want this state of things to be exaggerated? Your interests are mainly commercial and therefore, it is surely better for you to have a contented customer, a rich customer, who can put his hand in his pockets, and bring out pounds with which to buy your goods, rather than a poor and discontented customer. I submit that prosperity is necessary for the improvement of your trade. I am not speaking of the other moral forces, like friendliness, like comradeship because they come under the terms of psychology of the mind. But even from the point of view simply of material interests, you should give absolute Dominion freedom, Dominion Status, to India in order that your trade may prosper.

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THIRD DAY, NOV. 18.

## II. II. THE MAHARAJA OF ALWAR

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" The longest night seems to be passing away and the sorest trouble seems to be coming to an end at last. The seeming corpse appears to be awakening and a voice is coming to us away, back from where history and even tradition fails to peep into the gloom of the past; coming down from there, reflected as it were from peak to peak of the infinite Himalaya of knowledge, of love and of work.

From India, this Motherland of ours, a voice is coming unto us, gentle, firm and yet unmistakable in its utterances, and is gaining volume as it passes by, and behold the sleeper is awakened. Like the breeze from the mountains, it is bringing life into the almost dead bones and muscles. The lethargy is passing away, and only the blind cannot see or the preverted will not see that she is awakening, this Mother of ours, from her deep long sleep.

None can resist her any more; nor is she going to sleep any more. No more outward powers can hold her back any more, for the infinite giant is rising to her feet."

Mr. Chairman, Members of His Majesty's Parliaments and Fellow Sons of our great Motherland, I greet you in these words.

I invoke the highest blessing of Providence, that wisdom, strength, dignity and co-operation may guide our deliberations for the service of our country. Remember that this Conference, at which we have assembled, has, to some extent, the destinies of 300 millions—one-fifth of the population of the human race in its hands. This India is

the ancient land where philosophy and spirituality founded their first home. It is here that they dared to peep into the very mysteries of Heaven. It is the same India, which, through its inherent structure of being on true and solid foundations, has withstood the shocks of centuries, of hundreds of evils, of manners and customs. It is the same land which has been firmer than any rock in the world with its indestructible life. Many times one is told that looking into the past only degenerates and leads to nothing; but surely it is out of the past, it is on the past, that the future must be built. Look back, therefore, as far as you can; drink deep of the eternal foundations of Divine Love and Spirituality that are behind and, after that, look forward with heads held erect and march onward to make India brighter, greater and much higher than she has ever been. Remember the blood that courses in our veins. We must have faith in that blood that we build an India yet greater than she was.

The problems in India are more complicated, more momentous than the problems in any other country. Race, Religion, Language, Government, all these together make a nation. We see how in Asia, and especially in India, race difficulties and national difficulties, all melt away before the unifying power of spirituality. Therefore, for the well-being of our national cause, we must give up all our little quarrels and differences. Remember, above all things that our ancestors look down upon us and they will do so with contempt on their children, if they quarrel about minute differences. It is when the national body is weak that the disease germs—in a physical, social or political state, or even in an intellectual state crowd into the system. To remedy it, therefore, we must go to the roots of the disease, and the one tendency will be to strengthen the

man, the mind and the body. It is culture that withstands shocks, not a simple mass of knowledge. Therefore, my friends, let us do nothing that will divide us, for divisions will weaken us and degrade us all the more. You all know that at this psychological moment, the whole world is watching us. The solution will not be obtained by dragging down the higher, but by raising the lower up to a higher level. To make a great India, therefore, the secret lies in organisation, accumulation of power, but above all in the co-ordination of wills. Have that faith in ourselves, in that eternal power, first lodged in our soul, and then we will revive the whole of India. Let this be our determination and may Hê the Lord who comes again and again for the salvation of His own people as is described by many of the different Scriptures of the world lead us all to the fulfilment of our aim—the uplift of India, the good of the Empire.

We must now come down to mundane affairs; and Federation is the question before us. I am not enchanted with that word as a mere form of expression; to me "the United States of India" sounds more grand. Here are the representatives of two Indias, to-day each possessing different religions, but united in the common bond of patriotism, which permeates throughout our respective territories and provinces. We are united in the service of our country; united in our co-operation with the British Empire, of which we form a part—the highest symbol of whose political link is the King Emperor.

The two Indias are politically separate in their administration, and in order to understand the source of their existence, we must—but for only a few brief moments, peep into history. The East India Company towards the downfall of the Moghul Empire, consolidated

its organisation and marched forward, conquering territories, that in those days were divided between the decaying central sovereignty and States, some of which had existed for a long time, and others which had come into being through new opportunities. It is in such conditions that this Company carved out for itself territories which, excluding Burma, now amount to one half of India—called British India. This Company, on the other hand, instructed by its Directors, entered upon Treaty Alliances, Engagements Sanads and Agreements with Indian States, which still existed, as the result of which at the present day the other half is called Indian States.

With regard to the India of the States, when opportunities come we shall put forward our points of view in greater detail but here I will content myself with stating that we seek no new territories, we seek no new powers but the practical application of our Treaties and Alliances, consecrated by several Proclamations and Speeches from Queen Victoria and all the succeeding Sovereigns of England, the British Parliament and Viceroys to the present day. I will conclude this statement in two sentences.

Usage, sufferance and political practice have for diverse reasons, encroached upon these sacred domains of our Treaties and what we desire is that such extra rights outside our Treaties, assumed without our consent, and sometimes without our knowledge may be frankly and openly discussed, and should be decided by mutual consent, otherwise our Treaties between the Crown and ourselves have no meaning.

We know how sacredly the Crown and the British people respect their pledged word, and so we have faith that, when the British peoples recognise the simple truth

that we want no more than that those solemn Treaties with us should be observed in practice also, they will, we feel sure, appreciate that we make no new demands, but desire that the simple truth should be recognised and practised.

I now turn to British India. Those who are its representatives are perhaps best able to speak on this subject; but there are two alternatives, which I can best define by the terms "Eastern and Western" conceptions. Talking of the first, there are many who hold the view—however prosaic or antiquated it may sound—that British India may be formed again into Indian States. I will not occupy your time in discussing the details of the problem, however logical and interesting they may be, because I have not the time on the first day except to state (a) that it brings true Swaraj as a living reality considerably near; (b) that it perpetuates the link with the Crown through its Representative, the Viceroy of India. With Hindu, Mahommedan, Sikh and other States so formed, it would set at rest communal questions. Above all, it maintains in strong bonds commercial and trade relations with England. It necessitates an Imperial Army to safeguard the Crown's obligations and to protect the Ports and Frontiers, with the internal Army of the States maintained for security and assistance in emergencies. It ensures religious liberties to every section of India's population, and it carries on the tradition of India's rule according to her past history of hundreds of centuries.

And finally, coming to Federation or which I prefer to call "The United States of India," it immediately simplifies the problem of the rulers uniting in a common body to work out the problems of India. Here is the shortest and the quickest way to Dominion Status. This is what would be an indigenous growth.



The alternative to this had its first seeds sown in a little known despatch by Sir Charles Wood, the grandfather of the present Viceroy who was then Secretary of State, and who initiated the idea of the English language being the medium of Education and Government. This was followed by Lord Macaulay who strengthened this theory. Gradually, this system has grown, which culminated first in the Minto-Morley Reforms where the latter statesman, however, was opposed to the introduction of democratic organisations in India. It is from the time of Mr. Montagu, that passionate lover of India, my country, that events took a definite turn towards responsible self-government. Here the irony of Fate exhibits itself, for, as we learn from Lord Ronaldshay's book, this term was devised by Lord Curzon, who was no less opposed than Lord Morley to democratic institutions for India. This, I am sure, will be generally acknowledged, is a Western system of rule and, therefore, in India, not a growth but a graft.

But, having said so much, I now come to my main point that, if this system is now accepted by British India as the best method for her advance; if that is, as declared also, the final policy of the British peoples towards India—what do I conceive to be the opinion of the States? We realise all that this innovation implies in an Eastern country. We know that one word 'Franchise' alone has originated communal friction. We are not oblivious how it has created complexities of adjusting the future relations of a democratic India with the Indian States. There is further the proposition of this ideal truly permeating down to the masses and grasping them in its hold for the good of all.

May I frankly state with all good-will that, when I first began to know of the path that was chalked out before

British India on these lines, I was reluctantly reminded of an old Irish tune "It's a long, long way to Tipperary". However, when I have said this, I have said enough. I have deliberately done so, for how else could I reconcile myself with the statements that I am going to make regarding British India's future, and the other India of the States administered on ancient and traditional lines? I have certainly sought in doing so no popularity or favours.

Now, if, as I have said, this is the goal that India chooses, and if this is the goal which the British people have decided to place definitely and perpetually before British India, let me say, equally truthfully, that I wish British India God speed. I wish and most earnestly do that the goal of India's Freedom within the Empire as a self-governing Dominion may be reached as early as possible. Personally speaking, the sooner that goal is achieved, the happier I shall be, for who is there of India that does not wish our Motherland to achieve her rightful place alongside the other sister Dominions? Understand me why I emphatically state this is, because I have the inherent conviction that the sooner British India has freedom within these boundaries the sooner will India be able to have her own constitution, through which it can revitalize into a true and traditional India. I go so far as to say without any hesitation, I would not be true to myself or to the land of my birth could I hold opinions to the contrary that India should achieve her position on a footing of equality with her sister Dominions within the Empire, and arrive at the situation of a fully blossomed Dominion Status as early as possible. My aim in saying so is no other than that the larger Empire may find a grateful India, an India co-operating wholeheartedly in making this Empire, to which we are proud to belong, something even greater.

A united India will be the finest and truest jewel and the strongest force in the cause of our Empire. Under this system, I come again to the proposition called at present by the name of Federation, where my ideal is the "United States of India" within the Empire. We are assembled at this table to devise means and ways in order to achieve this end by co-operation, and I am sure you will not find our States lagging behind in joining hands in order to arrive at a happy solution.

We are quite conscious of what it means. We know what all big changes imply. It may necessitate at first a little more injustice. It may mean a little less efficiency at first.

It must mean larger sacrifices on every one's part, the States and, perhaps, some of the majorities and minorities. But for our country's cause, for the cause of India, for the cause of the Empire, shall we stop short for personal, communal or narrow-viewed considerations? Our lives will pass away, but our country will remain. Then at least, let it be said that we were the true sons of our Motherland, India.

I will conclude this statement with these words: When British Indians and Indian Princes came together on the first occasion within my memory to discuss problems of the Empire, it was during the War, at a Conference when Lord Chelmsford invited Representatives from both Indias to discuss questions regarding the performance by India of her duties towards the great cause that, in those momentous days, hung in the balance. I stated then that there would be people standing outside the doors of that house to ask what we had gained in this War Conference. I further stated that my reply would be that we had come at a time when the Empire was in need, and

that was no occasion for demands or gains. We came with the will to give whole-heartedly of what lay in our power for the Empire's cause, and we asked for nothing. Indeed, that was the time when it was our duty to give—however great or small our capacity—or what lay in us to the British Government.

Mr. Chairman, and through you I speak to England, to-day has come the hour of India's need, and to-day British India and the Indian States have assembled together for the second time, at another Conference in the centre of the Empire. Mr. Macdonald is the first Prime Minister, in my time, who has visited India. He knows her more intimately than many of his colleagues. We can appreciate that he may not have a very large majority in Parliament. But we know he has a tender corner in his heart for my land as we, many of us, have for his.

We have no desire to take the bit between our teeth and to run away, which means going astray. Nay! we are with you, with England, but it is now England's turn to come to our assistance and to help India to reach that position beyond which we have no desire to go, India, a sister Dominion within the Empire.

We are grateful to the Prime Minister for what he has already clearly stated in his Guildhall speech, when he said, "With the representatives of India and with the Princes, we shall be engaged in the same task of broadening liberty, so that we may live with them under the same Crown, they enjoying the freedom in self-government, which is essential to national self-respect and contentment." This will surely make a grateful India that will be England's greatest strength. Then we will prove to the world that our connection of the East with the West, that came through Destiny, has

worked out the great problems of life in harmony. Surely then, we shall evolve a civilisation which may well be the envy of the world. This ideal will be achieved for the glory of Britain and India. Then Oh, : England and India, as God's greater children, unite in that aim, and work according to the design of Providence to produce that result which may go down in the annals of the world as the purpose of God, namely service of His Creation—Humanity.

Oh ! England ! rise above your immediate political or trade interests, hold India's hand in her hour of need and make India great that England may be greater; and Oh ! India ! submerge all your communal or political differences and embrace the hand of England and make her great in order that India may be greater.

Thus, both united in bonds of unity and friendship, fulfil that destiny that Christ, Mahommed and the Vedas taught ; the destiny of self-realisation, and through it the cause of Man throughout the world. May we thus leave some footprints behind so that our progeny may know that East and West, which were differentiated by races, colours and religions, have, through friendship with England, arrived at that great position which will be the glory of God and the pride of Man.

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## SIR MUHAMMAD SHAFI

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My Lord Chancellor, when, on his return to India, His Excellency Lord Irwin made the historic announcement of October 1929, giving a more precise definition of the policy of His Majesty's Government towards the ultimate goal of India, than had been done in the declaration of 20th August 1917, and stating that His Majesty's Government intended to invite the representatives of British India and Indian India to a Round Table Conference in London, so that an agreed settlement of the Indian constitutional problem might be arrived at, the two great organisations of the Indian Mussalmans—the All-India Muslim League and the All Indian Muslim Conference—welcomed that announcement in the main for two reasons.

In the first place, they realised, that, when the Government and the people of a country are confronted with such difficult and complicated political problems as is the case now in India, a Round Table Conference at which the representatives of the parties concerned may have a full and frank exchange of views in order to bring about an agreed settlement, is the most effective way of realising the end in view.

In the second place, they believed that where the political situation is so grave, as it is at present in India, calling for immediate solution, a Round Table Conference is also the most expeditious way of meeting the situation.

And now that this Round Table Conference has been opened by His Majesty our King-Emperor in person, in a gracious speech, vibrating with the love of India and with sympathy for the legitimate aspiration of her people, I, for

one, refuse to believe that, with some of the best brains of England and of India assembled round this table, we shall not arrive at a satisfactory solution of the problems, which, both India and England have to face, a solution which, while satisfying the legitimate aspiration of the Indian peoples will thereby strengthen the link which binds England and India together.

My Lord Chancellor, ninety seven years ago, during the debate on the first Government of India Bill in 1833, the late Thomas Babington Macaulay, who had taken a prominent part in the preparation of that Bill, observed as follows :

The destinies of our Indian Empire are covered with thick darkness. It is difficult to form any conjecture as to the fateful result for a State which resembles no other in history, and which forms by itself a separate class of political phenomena. The laws which regulate its growth and decay are still unknown to us. It may be that the mind of India may expand under our system, till it has outgrown that system, that by good government we may educate our subjects into a capacity for better government, that having become instructed in European knowledge they may in some future age, demand European institutions. Whether such a day will ever come, I know not, but never will I attempt to avert it or retard it. Whenever it comes, it will be the proudest day in English history.

That was the glorious vision which the late Lord Macaulay saw, when introducing that measure in the House of Commons. The dawn of the day, when that vision may be realised, has now come.

Unfortunately, thereafter, if I may venture so to put it, the British Parliament succumbed to what can only be described as sleeping sickness in its relations with India ; for we find that it was not until 1861, some thirty years after, that a Bill was introduced in the House of Commons for the first time recognising the need for associating Indian representatives in the work of legislation in that country. But that association was a very limited one, secured only through nomination. Again, the British Parliament went to sleep,

and slept for over 40 years, and it was not until the year 1909, that the elective principle was introduced into the Legislative Councils of India. Meanwhile, India had gone on advancing rapidly. The influence of Western education, the study of British constitutional history, the study of French and Italian history, had aroused in the minds of educated Indians dreams which Macaulay, at any rate, had contemplated when the Bill of 1833, was introduced.

The result was that the tardy measures taken at such long intervals by the British Parliament, instead of satisfying the aspirations of the Indian peoples, gave further impetus to those aspirations. It is a curious fact in history that political aspirations have a very strange way of growing. What may satisfy a people to-day, if not given in time, will not satisfy them to-morrow. That is what is happening in India.

Shortly after the Act of 1909, a great war broke out, a war which gradually drew into it almost all the leading nations of the world. During that war, India came forward to prove her devotion to the British connection in that life and death struggle, in which the very existence of the Empire itself was in danger. India came forward to prove her devotion to the British connection by taking her share of the burden spontaneously and by providing for the armies of England over one million recruits—soldiers who vindicated the honour and the name of their country on the various battlefields of Europe, Asia, and Africa.

The part taken by India during this unparalleled world conflagration gained for her, her legitimate position in the international affairs of the world as a signatory to the Treaty of Versailles and an original member of the League of Nations. But, within the British Commonwealth of Nations, curious as it may appear, she still continued to



occupy an inferior position. After the conclusion of peace, until the appointment of the Royal Commission, unfortunately, a succession of events took place in India, which added to the various causes of unrest in that country influencing the Indian mind. When His Majesty's Government was pleased to appoint the Royal Commission, India was absolutely excluded from that Commission. No representative of India was appointed to it, with the result that the unrest in that country increased tenfold. And now, we have to face a situation, which in all earnestness is indeed grave.

When I see articles in the news-papers stating that all the unrest in India is confined only to the educated classes and that the uneducated masses, or Indians living in rural areas, have no sympathy whatever with the national movement which is going on in India, I am more than surprised. It would be very amusing, if it were not so tragic. Do writers who indulge in that sort of writing realise that hundreds of thousands of India's soldiers who took part in the Great War and who have seen with their own eyes what other people are in their own countries, have returned to India and after demobilisation have dispersed all over the rural areas of the country, living in villages, talking to their fellow villagers? They have told their fellow villagers what they have seen in Europe and in the near and middle East. Do these writers realise what a deep and widespread effect the stories, which these demobilised soldiers have told their country-men, have had in the villages and remote corners of rural India—what a deep and wide-spread effect they have had on the minds of Indian villagers?

Just look for a moment at what is going on now in India. This civil disobedience, which we have openly

condemned, not only in England, but in India—is that movement limited to the educated classes? No doubt the movement is led by the educated classes; but who are the men who are facing all the trials, all the troubles, which this Civil Disobedience movement has given rise to? They belong to the uneducated masses. To say that the uneducated masses are entirely out of touch with the national movement that is going on in India is, if I may venture to say so, the action according to the Oriental saying of a man who closes his eyes when the cat is approaching him, thinking that thereby he is safe.

Fortunately among the British Delegation here, there are at least three statesmen who know that I am a Punjabi, and that we Punjabis are not easily alarmed. Indeed, the greater the difficulty the more firm, the more cool and the more calm Punjabis become. They also know that I have proved, in the last 40 years of my public life in India, the strongest and firmest supporter of the British connection in India—so much so that on occasions I have been called a reactionary by my own countrymen. It is I who say that the situation in India is very grave, very grave.

If a solution calculated to satisfy the legitimate aspirations of the Indian peoples and thereby to strengthen the tie which binds England and India together is not attained by this Conference, I tremble to think what the situation will be. Now that we have met in order to try to find that solution, it is my business, as spokesman to-day of my community, of the Muslim group, to tell you what we, the representatives of the Muslim community in this Conference think. Our position is very simple. To repeat what I said in the Viceregal Lodge at Delhi in November, 1924:

"We want our countrymen in India to rise to that stature to which other people have risen in their own countries. We want India to attain Dominion status as an equal partner in the British Commonwealth of Nations."

I say we want India to rise to her full stature within the British Commonwealth of Nations for this reason in the new conditions which have been brought into existence as a result of the wonderful progress which science has made and as a result of the world forces which are now actually in operation as a consequence of the Great War, no country in the world however rich or powerful can afford to lead an isolated life.

The tendency of modern international movements is towards the association of Nations and countries for the purposes of security of mutual help and co-ordination of effort. Therefore we Mussalmans of India realise that the British Commonwealth of Nations is there for India to be associated with it and to continue to be associated with it for her own benefit and in her own interest. That is the deep rooted conviction in our minds and that is the reason of our traditional loyalty.

At the same time it is perfectly natural for the seventy one millions of His Majesty's Mussalman subjects to insist upon this—that in the constitutional and administrative evolution of India they must have their legitimate share both in the Provincial and in the Central Government.

I do not desire on the present occasion to enter into the details of the claims which the Mussalman community has put forward in this connection. That is a matter which will have to be discussed in the committees. Some of our own committees are already considering that matter, and I trust they will be able to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion. To my mind in view of India's vast extent, in

view of her territorial divisions well recognised for centuries past, and in view of the other complicated conditions, which obtain in India, there is only one form of government, one basis for the future constitution of India, which alone will suit the circumstances of the case, and that is the federal system. We therefore welcome the declarations, made by Their Highnesses the Maharajah of Bikaner and the Maharajah of Alwar, on behalf of their Princely Order, that the Indian States are willing to come into an All-India Federation.

To me, as a constitutional lawyer, a self-governing India side by side with an Indian India having its relations within the Crown is a hopelessly impossible conception. A Federation of India must include both British India as well as Indian India. In so far as British India is concerned, we must, as it is the case in every other kind of structure, build upwards and not downwards.

Therefore, I welcome the recommendation made in certain quarters of granting Provincial Autonomy to the Provinces. These will be the federal units of our All-India Federation in the future; but the Mussalman Group have no hesitation in saying that that is not enough—that the responsibility must be introduced in the centre.

How far that responsibility should go is a matter which will be discussed in the committees hereafter. We are willing that, for the transitional period, certain vital reservations might be made. That is to the interests of India itself, and in consequence we have no objection to that. But you have seen that the Report of the Royal Commission has been condemned in India by every school of political thought, mainly on the ground that it does not propose to introduce responsibility in the Centre.

To the British Delegation, I have one final appeal to make before I sit down. Believe me, a happy and contented India will be a source of immense strength to the British Commonwealth of Nations. Take your courage in your two hands. The situation is grave. When a situation is grave, far-sighted statesmen should require that it should be handled with wisdom and generosity. Taking your courage in your two hands, do what you did in South Africa shortly after the conclusion of the South African War.

What has been the result? During the sittings of the Imperial Conference, which I had the honour of attending on behalf of my country, nothing struck me more than the way in which the representatives of South Africa, throughout the deliberations of the Conference, upheld the tie which binds South Africa and England together.

Believe me, the legitimate satisfaction of legitimate aspirations brings contentment, and contentment awakens feelings of love and affection for those who have satisfied those legitimate aspirations. If the aspirations of an educated India are satisfied, the result will be that the tie between India and England will be strengthened. Then all your Imperial problems—the problem of Empire defence, the problem of inter-Imperial trade, even the problem of Empire unemployment—will be solved within a measurable distance of time.

That is my appeal to the members of the British Delegation. Wisdom and sympathy is what is required on this occasion—that wisdom and sympathy with which Lord Irwin is handling the situation in India to-day. To those who have been attacking Lord Irwin, I would say this; but for Lord Irwin handling the situation, as he has done in India, to-day the situation would have been ten times worse. (prolonged applause).

In the name of India, and in the name of the British Commonwealth of Nations, of which India forms an integral part, and hopes to be an equal partner with the other Dominions, I earnestly beg of you representatives of the British Delegation, representatives of the Indian Delegation and representatives of the British Indian Delegation, to realise the gravity of the situation, and to give their undivided attention to a satisfactory solution of the grave problem, with which we are confronted—a solution which, while satisfying the legitimate aspirations of the people of India, will, at the same time, strengthen the link which binds England and India. (loud applause).

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## H H THE MAHARAJA OF REWA

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Mr Chairman, I find that now my turn comes to speak, after so many eminent brother Delegates from India have spoken before me. We have heard most illustrious speeches made by the Indian Princes and by the most capable British Indian leaders—leaders who have a command of law, advocacy, and it will be a somewhat difficult task for me to express the claims of India, and my own views, in any better language than has already been used.

When I was asked to attend this Conference to represent the conservative element among the Indian States, I was aware that the occasion would be one of the first importance.

I am forced to confess, however, that the extreme importance of the occasion has been very much more fully brought home to me, by the opening speeches to which I listened yesterday and to day. It seems to me, without exaggeration, that a nation is being brought to the birth. More than ever before, I am conscious of the measure of the task before us, and I realise that we shall require every ounce of wisdom, patience, goodwill, adaptability, and imagination which everyone of us has to contribute, if these great problems are to be successfully solved.

I am conscious that a heavy burden of responsibility has been laid on me. It must seem strange to some that, in a country, whose ways of life are so ruled by custom and tradition as India, there should be no political party which calls itself conservative. Yet I believe that there is scarcely one of my fellow Delegates, who would submit,

without protest, to the designation of Conservative. So far, at least, as designation goes, I stand alone. My task is in some ways a thankless one. It is made more difficult by the fact that on the personal side, I am entirely without experience of the public discussion of affairs ; and I ask the forbearance of all here, and of those in India for whom I speak, if through inexperience, I prove an indifferent advocate of my cause. At the same time, I feel greatly honoured that I have been chosen to take part in these deliberations, and however faulty my advocacy may be, I am encouraged and upheld by the conviction that half the humanity shares the views which it falls to me to propound. I feel certain that not only among the millions who till the soil of India, but among all sober-minded politicians and statesmen there must be a large measure of support for, and sympathy with, those who counsel a cautious advance, and preach the dangers of precipitation and short cuts.

I believe, moreover, that when once power is given to India to shape her own destinies, a strong party of experienced and responsible politicians will emerge, which will call itself the Conservative Party, for the chief ingredient in conservatism is, in my view, a sense of responsibility. Such a sense of responsibility has not, so far, had an opportunity to develop and the constitutional advancement of India will provide it with the opportunity for which it is waiting.

The energy that is now being devoted to gaining that advancement will, when the victory is won, be converted to the consolidation and preservation of the position that has been gained. I do not claim that the conservative point of view has a monopoly of wisdom and foresight ; but I do not, on the other hand, admit that the progressive



point of view rallies to its banners the whole available stock of energy or idealism. I do, however, suggest, that, in the world at large, the conservative elements are the great repository of experience, and that they have therefore much of value to contribute to the common stock.

In this country of England, where one of the great parties of the State has been for many years known as the Conservative Party, it may appear to many to be mere waste of time and breath to say that the conservative attitude does not begin and end with blind and obstinate resistance to all changes of any kind. I believe, none the less that there are in India those who suspect the conservative attitude to consist merely in distrust of, and opposition to, change as such, and I wish, therefore, to begin with a sincere assurance that this is not the case.

The Princes, whatever their views, whether conservative or advanced are in the fullest sympathy with all the legitimate aspiration of the leaders of thought in British India. The Princes of India welcome the emergence of India as a nation among the nations of the world, and gladly and whole heartedly support the efforts of representative Indians by which this claim to nationhood is being established.

There are, however, I will confess, some aspects of our Indian problem in regard to which the men of conservative principles will, I believe, obstinately, though not blindly, resist all change. They will resist with all their power any sign of failing in loyalty to the Crown, and any attempt to sever India's destinies from the British Empire, of which we are proud to be a part. I hope and believe, however, that to this extent every member of this Conference is a conservative, and I content myself with saying that I yield to none in my loyalty to these ties, and

in the sincerity of my desire for India's happiness and prosperity in the future.

Before I begin to state my position, I wish to make one point clear. To guard against possible misunderstanding, let me say here that, in my approach to these problems, I am dealing mainly with those aspects which concern the States.

Perhaps I can best define the conservative attitude by saying that we differ from other schools of thought less, as to the object to be achieved, than as to the pace and the method of achievement. A good car needs a brake as well as an accelerator; a ship requires an anchor as well as an engine. The proverbial difference between 'haste' and 'speed' is a truth so commonplace that we are apt to be impatient when we are reminded of it, but it is the function of the conservative to insist on the truth of truths so old, that they are sometimes forgotten. Each one of us as an individual learns such truths for himself by experience, sometimes bitter. I merely ask that we should apply to the problems of statecraft the caution and restraint, which we exercise in the daily round of our individual lives.

One of the most difficult aspects of the problem which concerns us all, is in my view the variety of the interests which have to be reconciled. We are met, not to prove before an impartial tribunal that one view and not the other is true, that one policy should be adopted, one community or one set of interests should be favoured, and the others set aside, overlooked, or suppressed. We have to reconcile all points of view and achieve a measure of agreement. It is possible to coax into the parlour those who cannot be driven into the fold. For this purpose, the quality which we require in the largest measure is mutual

confidence. The quality of confidence is a plant of slow growth. It is not a commodity that can be weighed out in parcels and distributed. Its growth cannot be artificially forced. It grows in the soil of safety and it requires a peaceful atmosphere of security for its nourishment. Until this spirit of mutual confidence and goodwill animates us all the path of the Indian nation will be a difficult one to tread. I feel so strong the danger of pressing ahead in disregard of the health of this tender plant, on whose life and growth our safety depends, that I make no apology for my insistence on the danger of precipitancy and the need for caution in our rate of advance.

The Indian States—I speak for the conservative element—wish to safeguard their individual existence. They ask for guarantees that the changes in the Government of India, which are foreshadowed, will leave them free to pursue their own ideals in the manner of their heritage and tradition. They ask that their position will not be modified without their own consent, that changes will not be forced on them and that the treaties into which they entered with the British power in India will be honoured in the spirit and in the letter.

It may be thought by some that there is a sinister intention underlying the request for guarantees and safeguards the intention to make permanent the divisions which exist in India and so to prevent her from attaining the full stature of a nation. This is not the desire of the States.

We have no desire to stand in the way of reforms for British India. We wish only to be assured that the reforms which the Indians of British India desire, do not impose on us changes which we do not desire. We wish to preserve the individual and historical identity of the

States which our forefathers carved out for themselves and handed down to us.' If these interests can be secured, we make no further claims. If these interests can be secured without our participating in the common Councils of India, we have no wish to thrust ourselves in, simply for the sake of participation. If, as may well be the case, they cannot be secured, except by participation, we desire no greater measure of participation than is needed to achieve these ends.

Similarly as to the pace of the advance, if the changes which are decided on for British India necessitate changes in the relations between the Government of India and the States, we desire that such changes may be made step by step; that they shall be restricted at each stage to a minimum, and that the effect of each step shall be carefully considered before a fresh step is taken. Many of the changes which are adumbrated are, from the conservative point of view, in the nature of an experiment. The more fundamental the changes, the greater and more daring will the experiment be. There is a Latin proverb which teaches us that experiments should be made on subjects of comparatively little value. The States do not regard themselves as objects of comparatively little value (Laughter), and they are reluctant to be the subject of experiment, because the daring nature of an experiment, even its brilliant successes, are slight consolations to the object whose existence is sacrificed for it. We wish to know the nature of our destination. We are unwilling to set out for a destination hereafter to be revealed.

There are those who see in visions of the future a picture of an India united in religion, race, and creed, pursuing one ideal and standing as one nation without diversity of interests or outlook among its peoples. This

hope the future may bring true, but not the world of the present.

We desire that the interests of the present shall not be completely subordinated to those of the future: and we are not willing to surrender the substance of our position to-day, for the shadow of a position which we may one day achieve in a Federated India. We do not desire federation, if this involves the gradual disappearance of all that the States have stood for in the past.

I have one more thing to say. Rights and obligations are complimentary. They are the two sides of one medal. This is as true of the nation as of the individual. It is perhaps inevitable that, in negotiations such as these, the rights should be emphasised by one side or the other, and the obligations glossed over. Let us, I mean everyone here, recognise that every right involves an obligation. If we ask for rights, let us honestly and squarely face the implications of our claims. Let us strive, not in a spirit of bargaining, but in a statesmanlike spirit of compromise and accommodation to satisfy each other's anxieties, in the confident hope that by concessions to the fears or prejudices of the doubting, a rich harvest is to be won, for, by the confidence thus inspired, the ground is prepared for that spirit of mutual trust and goodwill, to create which is the real aim of all concession.

His Majesty the King Emperor reminded us, in the gracious words with which he opened this Conference, that "ten years is but a brief span in the life of a nation." These are weighty words which I hope will be pondered deeply by all who share in the decisions of our destinies. I have singled them out, not because I would have the Indian nation mark time even for a moment when the way is clear to go forward, but because I feel that

however rapid the pace of development, which the facts may admit, the distance that we have to travel is more than a day's journey. It requires stages for its completion. If I may vary my metaphor, the structure of a constitution is so massive that it cannot be erected on a fragile foundation, and it is in the laying of the foundations that the greatest foresight, caution and sagacity are imperatively necessary. If by the united labours of the experienced statesmen of our two countries the foundations of a worthy edifice can be well and truly laid, we can, then more safely hope that the youth of India may be left to complete the building.

The state of India to-day is such as to bring tears to the eyes of all who love her. It may be that in the inscrutable ways of Providence, she is being led through pain and travail to a future of joy and happiness. I pray that this be so. I am reminded on this occasion of the words of a great British orator, Edmund Burke, when the fate of another nation was in the balance—"I think" he said, "we ought to inaugurate our discussions on this subject with the ancient invocation of the Church of 'Sursom Corda'—'Lift up our hearts' ", and conclude my speech with some memorable words of his—"magnanimity in politics is not seldom the truest wisdom;" and "a great Empire and little minds go ill together."

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## LORD PEEL

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No one is more sensible than myself of the profound interest and importance of this Conference, and I think no man can contemplate without emotion this assembly here of so many representatives of India, with the Princes and the British Delegation, gathered together in this old Palace of St. James in order to deliberate on this question affecting the constitution and the future of India. Indeed, I feel in listening to the speeches of my old colleague the Maharaja of Alwar and Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, as if I were back again, seven or eight years ago, to the time when we were colleagues in an Imperial Conference and when we battled together and fought together, I believe, not unsuccessfully for the further recognition of the position of Indians in the Dominions and elsewhere.

I think and I know that those gentlemen and others who know me, will not imagine that I am lacking in sympathy with the ideals and aspirations that have been expressed here and in India, and in whatever I say I am impressed solely by the duty of speaking courageously and frankly to the audience here. My hopes and views about India's future do not differ greatly from those who have expressed most passionately their own aspirations.

May I interpellate this, and may I say first of all how extremely interested I am in the last speech heard from the Maharaja of Rewa—how well he understood conservatives and conservatism. They hold on to what is best in the past, and they look forward to what is best in the future; and, at the same time, with a lack of arrogance.

which, I hope, you will note. We do not claim to have a monopoly of all the virtues. (Laughter and applause.)

Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru made some observations about the interest of members of Parliament in Indian affairs, and about the very small number of men who control matters both here and in India. There seemed to be implied in his observations the suggestion that, while many members of Parliament know very little about India, there was not a deep and profound interest among the people of this country in the affairs and in the future of India, and in their connection with India.

Speaking in the presence of members of Parliament, I would not like to suggest that there are those outside who know more about political affairs than they do, but I do assure you of this—and it would be a great mistake for anybody in this assembly to form a contrary impression—that the pride of Englishmen in the history of their achievements and of their connection with India, and in the future of India, is deep and profound. Do not let any man go away from this assembly with the impression that the interest, the profound and even instructed interest, in Indian affairs is confined to half a dozen men in Parliament or in the Services.

I comment for a moment, if I may, on the observation made by Mr. Jayakar, because I wish to hang a remark upon it. His observation was to the effect that England's main interest in India is commercial. He said "There are 500 or 1,000 families who send their younger sons to India to make a career for themselves." Here again, though I have no doubt he did not intend it, I seemed to note a view somewhat depreciatory of those great Services which have worked for so many years with a selfless devotion to Indian interests and Indian causes. May I say that I felt



a little hurt at that observation? Like others, my own family has sent out many men to India, who have devoted themselves to the cause of India, and I think it a pity, when we are gathered here to talk about the relations of these countries, that we should say anything that would depreciate, to however small an extent, what I believe to have been the devoted services rendered by so many of my countrymen in the building up of India.

Anyhow, I can assure you of this, that no observation of mine will depreciate the services rendered by Indians to the Empire (Applause) I know, and I can speak not merely for a party in this, but on behalf of my countrymen, that whatever may be the constitutional issues they feel most strongly and most deeply the contributions that India has made to the Empire, and they are full of sympathy with, and full of gratitude for the great devotion and the great energy which Indians, Princes and peoples alike, threw themselves into their great contribution to the War (Applause) Therefore, when we are approaching what is no doubt a very great subject, let us at least free our minds, if we can, from any idea that there exists, either in my own party or in the country, any indifference or lack of zeal or lack of sympathy towards the problems, which you gentlemen are here discussing.

Naturally, we must come down to practical affairs, though I myself have listened with profound interest and sympathy to some of the emotional appeals, that have been made to us, by the eloquent speakers who have preceded me, because I am not at all one of those who think that these matters can be settled by dry and hard legal or constitutional formulae. I am very sensible and sensitive indeed to the great part which sentiment and emotion play in the building up of human affairs. But, of course we

have to consider that the result of our deliberations may be embodied in a Bill and that that Bill is to be presented to Parliament for its consideration or for its criticism or adoption, and that being so, I think it may be my duty to say a word or two as to the attitude or the feeling in many Conservative circles towards some of the impressions they have formed, or which have been shaped in their minds by the happenings of recent years, because I want to pay the only compliment that I can pay to this assembly, the compliment of frankness, and I believe that any contributions that we can make should be not only sincere, but should be true as far as we can make them, so that we may join together, as it were, in building up on that basis of frankness and sincerity and fact the structure which we do hope to build.

I shall have to say a word or two on that in a moment but let me make a quotation from the Viceroy's declaration itself. I was very glad to hear the enthusiasm and applause with which our present Viceroy's name was received, and it is therefore with all the more confidence that I want to read out to you, to refresh our memory, shall we say, a passage in that address delivered on the 15th January 1930 to the members of the Legislative Assembly :

I have never sought to delude Indian opinion into the belief that a definition of purpose, however plainly stated, would of itself, by the enunciation of a phrase, provide a solution for the problems which have to be solved, before that purpose is fully realised. The assertion of a goal, however precise its terms, is of necessity a different thing from the goal's attainment. No sensible traveller would feel that the clear definition of his destination was the same thing as the completion of his journey; but it is an assurance of direction.

I lay special stress upon those words, because I think there has been certainly in some political circles in India, though not mentioned here, a misinterpretation of them ;

and they have regarded the statement of the goal as the same thing as the statement of the immediate purpose. Criticisms of statements as bad faith or breach of faith are often very easy to make, but, even though denied, travel far, and I wish to state here that there is no promise in that statement of the immediate translation into fact of the full measure of Dominion Status, and that it is pointed out there as a goal which may be attained in a swifter way or in a shorter time, if things go well with the political development of India, and therefore, while we are united on the goal, we may, as the Maharaja stated, differ as to the pace or rapidity with which we may attain that goal.

Now I have one or two things to say, if you will allow me to say them to you on the recent events in India, which have, to some extent, disturbed and harassed and upset the more Conservative bodies or Conservative opinion in this country. I have to say so, because unless we deal frankly with these matters, we cannot really form a conception of the attitude which Parliament may adopt towards subsequent Bills. In many ways Conservative feeling has been deeply moved by recent events in India, it has been deeply disturbed by the great non co operation movement. Conservatives have never believed that non co operation on a large scale could be non violent. They have never believed that the experiments already tried in India some years ago with unfortunate results could be tried again in India with more fortunate results.

They are harassed also by an anxiety that, if we agree here upon some constitution and if the representatives of India go back to work (it, there is a party, very strong party and an organised party in India which will, as it were, wrest the opportunity from the hands of those who are here, and will merely use those powers that are

granted for furthering their own separatist and independent ends.

We were told that that independence and those declarations of independence by the Congress were due to frustrated ambition, frustrated desire for further Self-Government. I am not going for a moment into the psychology of those declarations. I will only say that declarations of that sort of independence and separation from the Empire have been made. I regret that they have been made, but they have had some definite influence upon Conservative opinion in this country. Further than that, declarations have been made even about repudiations of debts, or in the milder form (but coming to exactly the same thing as far as credit is concerned) of an examination into the debts incurred by India to see that they have been properly incurred. One can easily see, and one knows, that had a most unfortunate effect among the commercial and trading classes of this country. It has given a shock to their confidence, possibly made them rather more conservative in their views than they were before.

We have had an observation about monopolies from Mr. Jayakar. I do not know quite what he meant by these monopolies. Referring to what would be done, if India had Self-Government, he said, 'Let me give them one warning—that they will not enjoy the monopoly they have, in so far as it is enjoyed, on the simple ground that in their skin there is less pigment than in mine.'

What are those monopolies? I submit that there is no monopoly—legal, constitutional or of any other kind—except that monopoly which is obtained by skill, by energy and by commercial success. I say advisedly that there is no single commercial operation in India, which cannot be undertaken just as well by any Indian as by any Britisher.

Therefore, I submit without fear of contradiction or challenge, that there is no such thing as a monopoly such as has been referred to. Then, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru told us that the Moghuls were conquerors and that they became domiciled. He seemed to draw some distinction between the position of the British in India and the Moghuls in that respect. What I am going to say is this—and our feeling in regard to this point is strong—that quite apart from any legal constitutional rights founded on Acts of Parliament our position in India, and our services to India, have given us a strong claim on moral grounds alone to be considered, a claim which I think has not been fully dealt with by any of the speakers who have addressed us.

I am not going to allude—because they are so familiar to you—to our achievements on the material side, our work in the destruction or diminution of famine, or the great works of irrigation, or what we have done for law and order and the whole machinery of government. All that long history of education in political theory has been, as I think many Indians will admit, one of the great contributing causes to the growth of that national sentiment, to which such eloquent expression has been given in this Conference already. Therefore when we are talking of the British position in India, let us remember that we have been there now a long time.

Do not talk of us, as one or two speakers have done, as aliens. Talk of us as those who have contributed greatly to the constitution and to the growth, moral and material, of India, as those who have won a place in India of consideration—of partnership, if you like to use that word on account of our previous service.

I want to allude with some—I was going to say hesitation—to the work of the Statutory Commission, because

we have been told by one speaker already that it has met with general condemnation in India. I assume that everybody here present has read carefully and pondered both volumes of the Report of the Statutory Commission, and really I am often amazed when I look at it that so little regard appears to have been paid by some people to that Report. I am one of those unrepentant persons who having read it and studied it, consider it to be a great contribution both in thought and report to the great Indian problem.

It has been treated, as in some respects it might be called, a very revolutionary document, and I want to make that statement good. Just take the position as regards the provinces—take the question of the proposed introduction of full self-government in the provinces. (A Delegate: Absolutely bogus.) I will come presently to the question whether it is bogus. These proposals, I submit, are very wide and far-reaching. What is to be done by these proposals? First of all, dyarchy is to be swept entirely away, and the councils in the Provinces are to be furnished with exceedingly wide powers over the great populations in these provinces. Really they are not provinces, they are countries. They are countries with 20, or 30, or 40 millions of people. Is it nothing that these wide powers are to be fully transferred to Indian Ministers whose laws and whose administrative acts will touch most closely the intimate lives of these millions of people in the different provinces in education, in local government, in health, in agriculture, and even in regard to the more disagreeable subject of taxation? I submit that a change of that kind proposed in the self-government of the provinces is more far-reaching than many have given it credit for.

Under these circumstances, is there really anything inherently unreasonable in proposing that, while the pro-

vinces are adjusting themselves to these new conditions, settling down, learning their new powers, applying the arts of government to these great populations, that during that time—not a long time perhaps—there should be no substantial chance in the central government? I know that Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru said it would be strange, if responsible Ministers in the provinces were to be under the control of an irresponsible government at the Centre. Many Governors of Provinces will tell you that they are very little under the control of the Government at the Centre, whether responsible or irresponsible, but surely at this time of day, it is a little late to talk of irresponsible government. All governments, whatever their form, are very well aware of, and are extremely sensitive to, the opinions, the thousand and one sympathies and interests and movements of thoughts which govern them, as they govern more technically responsible governments.

Again,—I am still dealing with the rather conservative side of opinion in this country—take the question of police. Many must be aware that the transfer of the police is viewed with very great anxiety in many quarters, not only in this country but also by some of the Governments in India. While we have every hope that what was suggested by Sir Muhammad Shafi may come to pass, and that with agreement all these old difficulties and communal troubles may disappear, yet we must at the same time be well aware that, even in the last few years, we have seen most unfortunate exhibitions of communal troubles, and that there are some people who think that perhaps that impartiality, which European or British control over the police can give, may be of some advantage. Possibly conservative opinion may to some extent put too high a value on the length of time during which some

countries have enjoyed representative institutions, and may think that the habits acquired by those countries can only be attained by the long experience of years. It may be that they think that those habits must be deeply rooted before the full strain of self-government in a vast country like India can be thrown upon them. We have seen recently in other countries, where parliamentary institutions have been too rapidly set up, that they have failed and withered, because they had not the roots on which they might grow. We feel this not from any desire to delay in India the realisation of her aspirations, but because Parliament does feel, and must feel a tremendous responsibility towards India.

It is not by any means forgetful of its promises and declarations, but its long association with India has laid great responsibility upon it, and it cannot, therefore, by lassitude or easy good-nature telescope too rapidly the process by which self-government is attained.

As has been observed to-day already, it may be that Parliamentary Institutions in India are not a growth but a graft, and I have always been one of those who were not anxious for the too rapid development of a particular form of Parliamentary Institutions in India, because I felt that India itself might have a strong contribution of its own to bring to constitutional problems, and that it was a pity to stereotype too early the particular form which that constitution ought to take.

May I, before I sit down, say a few words on what I think is really the subject we are discussing—whether the future constitution of India should be unitary or federal? On the unitary point, I have not much to say; I can hardly conceive myself that, in a country so vast, so diversified and so populous, it is possible to set up or maintain what



is called a unitary government. You would have, I am sure, the centre of government so far removed from living contact with the peoples of India that there could be very little sympathy—that sympathy which must be established between the ruler and the ruled. I, therefore, incline most strongly to that federal idea which builds up units, of great variety, if need be within the whole and which contribute to the wholesome thing of the richness and the variety which they themselves contain.

It might be useful to meditate upon the relation that could be established between the Princes and the States of India and the Provinces. One would be impressed, I think, by the fact that some unity must be established between them because otherwise, one might see the Princes on the one side with their States and the Provinces on the other side, moving in separate orbits almost in opposite directions not towards that unity which seems to be necessitated by the growing forces of civilisation with the practical application of science and industry drawing them together. This idea has been planted, has flourished, and has grown rapidly. With all respect, I should say that in this matter, the Report of the Government of India seems to me to be somewhat out of date. It seems to contemplate the setting up of such a scheme as being a remote possibility in the future but not, I think, in the present.

I feel—as I think has been indicated by some of the speeches delivered during these two days, notably that of the Maharaja of Bikaner which met with answering sympathy from other speakers—that this idea of some sort of federal union between Princes and Provinces has grown rapidly and has enlisted a large amount of sympathy from great sections of opinion. That seems to be a

tremendous gain, because it is very difficult to see how it is possible to get an organised unity in India, except on some federal basis. It certainly would be one of the most remarkable federations in history. You have had federal government with the grant of powers from centre to the units, and on the other hand units seeking to get more power. Here you would have the movement both ways, from the states and from the centre to the provinces.

Of course, many grave questions remain to be considered, the question of what should be the powers of the Central Government, and whether those powers should be equal as regards the provinces and the States, or whether as regards the States the powers of the Central Government should be greater than as regards the Provinces, whether on the basis of that, you can construct assemblies and constitutions which would give full play to the different feelings and claims of the Provinces and of the States.

We have listened very carefully to the claims made by the Princes for their States, and everyone will see that great problems arise in the attempt, it may be, to harmonise the interests in this way of Princes and of Provinces. I will not say a word about the "residuary powers"; that is one of those phrases so dear to constitutional lawyers, which may perhaps disappear altogether and be found to have been divided equally, or in some proportion, between the States and the Provinces.

I argue, therefore, that though many problems have got to be faced, yet so fruitful is this idea that it would be a misfortune, if anyhow some of the foundations for carrying out that idea could not be laid in this Conference; because what one is afraid of is this—that when you set up institutions in a country, they tend to gather round them sentiment, feeling, knowledge, sympathy and interest which,

once they are started, are hard to bend away from the course on which they were started. Therefore, if we really do want, as I believe this great assembly does want, to exhibit its sympathy in practical action for these great constitutional changes leading in a federal direction, I submit that our minds should work in that direction—that we should attempt not only to do nothing contrary to the federal idea, as the Report of the Statutory Commission suggests, or as the Government of India's Report suggests, but we should attempt perhaps to lay some stones immediately on which that great federal idea can be built.

India indeed is amazing in the extent and in the variety of its resources, in the beauty of its scenery, in the contrast of its races and its religions and its peoples. I do not think it is merely a dream to suggest that that variety and that contrast within a unity should be reflected in the great constitution combining Provinces and Princes together in one common whole.

I have made some criticisms. I have to say something about conservative opinion in this country, about provincial developments and the question of development at the centre.

But I should like to affirm, in my last few sentences, that, at the same time there is no one who feels more strongly than I do, and I believe the party also, the vast importance of bringing India, sooner or later, by processes quicker or slower as the case may be, into its equal part in the great community of the British Commonwealth. I am not one of those who can see the British Empire, with its great constituent nations without India in it. I am certain, the loss would be great to that Commonwealth of Nations. I am equally certain—I am confident that the loss would

be great to India as well. We cannot be of great use and service to each other. (Applause).

I say, speaking here to so many representatives of India, that the contribution which they can bring in thought, in knowledge, not merely on the material side, but on the spiritual side as well, will enormously enrich the content of what may be in the future the community of British Nations. It is the very variety, which we find in India, from the other Dominions, which constitutes the great attraction for the resources of constructive statesmanship.

In this strange world where, as we grow older, we are more impressed perhaps by the fleeting and the transitory aspect of things than by permanence and stability, I trust that this fruitful vision of unity may endure—and may endure so long as human hearts beat to the music of noble causes. All men's imaginations are stirred by high conception to great achievement. (Applause).

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## SIR HUBERT CARR

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Mr. Chairman, it is obvious that the section of the British India Delegation to which I belong, approaches this question from rather a different standpoint to that of many of the previous speakers. I feel strongly, however, that although we are racially separated, we are united in a desire for the welfare and progress of India.

It would be absurd for me to suggest that we have the same impelling urge in that desire as those who are born in India but we do have a very sincere sympathy with that desire, not from any standpoint of superiority, but because we recognise in that genuine desire that which we ourselves would entertain, were we sons of India. I think —perhaps we all think that the keenness of the desire has lead to India travelling faster than any of us had expected and we are inclined to think that she has arrived at the present point a little out of breath.

We feel that it is a most happy condition that we are drawn here to-day really to get away from the turmoil which is liable to warp judgment and really to look at the whole problem in the surroundings which have been laid for us here.

We are, of course, very largely actuated by anxiety that the present order should not give way to immature ideas which would lead to a breakdown. Everybody must feel the risks which are facing India, and little excuse is wanted, when one looks at the appalling conditions which happened from too rapid changes of government in Asia.

Much has already been said by Lord Peel which represents the views of the British community in India. I will not attempt to follow him, but with regard to the main question of federal or unitary government, we are united in believing that federal government, is the line which offers the best chances of successful progress to a united India. We believe in the full application of the federal principle not only in bringing the States and the Provinces together at the centre, but also in its application to other departments of government—finance, railways, and so on.

When we come to the question of responsibility at the centre, we are frankly doubtful whether that is possible at the present time. It has been said that given responsibility, many of the difficulties with which the present Government has to contend will disappear. I do not think experience warrants us placing great faith in that, nor do I think the remarks that have already been made here really induce us to follow that line of thought. It was said yesterday that that which satisfied India twelve months ago does not satisfy her to-day, that which satisfies her to-day will not satisfy her six months hence. I rather agree with that, but it does not induce in me faith to say that now is the time to make any great move. I should like to see further consolidation of thought in Indian political opinion as to what is best at the centre before any strong move is made.

There are several points which lead me to take that view, but I will only touch on them briefly, as I do not want to occupy your time too long. For instance, in the matter of dealing with disturbances and maintaining law and order, I have no doubt that the present Government and system of government is perfectly capable of taking care of the country at present. We do not advocate any

more than the most ardent patriot here, that the methods of force are the methods we wish to see applied; but they are methods which may have to be applied at times, not only by the Government as constituted at present, but by any national Government of the future. It must be admitted that hitherto the Legislative Assembly has not proved itself ready to grant the Government such powers as they have often found necessary for coping with the the conditions that prevail in the country.

The talk about the repudiation of debt and the examination of national indebtedness, as has already been pointed out, not helped to inspire confidence in those whose future is wrapped up in India and we feel very strongly that any Government that is going to be for the good of India must retain not only the confidence of its own nationals but also international confidence.

I have mentioned some of the difficulties and considerations which build up our present attitude. It is not one of lack of sympathy; it is not one of wishing to go back or to stand still; we recognise the impossibility of that. But we do most sincerely hope for the fullest consideration of the schemes that are going to be put forward before any minds are closed to the possibility that pace of realisation is not the best criterion.

Our community are entirely unrepentant still as to the Statutory Commission and its formation. We believe that Parliament had every right and was wise to find out the conditions in India as visualised by their own members; but, with that feeling, we were intensely strong that no legislation should take place before all schools of Indian thought had had the opportunity of expressing their views. That is why my community, when first the calling of this Conference was announced, immediately welcomed it as

ensuring that use of Indian experience without which none of us can hope to attain the aim we seek to achieve in the future.

As regards our own position out there, it is one of friendship and common interests, and we have welcomed the assurance as to the way in which it is intended to treat British interests in India in the future. It makes it easier for us to welcome forward moves in the political field, and we do welcome India's claim to a position in the Empire as a Dominion. There are admittedly grave difficulties which call for time to overcome, but we are proud as members of the British Delegation to face those difficulties with the certain hope that we are going to overcome them.

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## LIEUT-COL. GIDNEY

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I address this Conference in a dual capacity, as an Indian in speaking for India and as a member of the Anglo-Indian community representing my views with regard to the future constitution of India. I should be indulging in a truism, were I to say that both the unitary and federal types of government have their good points. In the past, India has been ruled, and her present nationalistic spirit developed, under the stimulus of a centralised form of government. To replace this suddenly by a federal government is obviously a leap in the dark, the more so when one finds it connotes the close material co-operation of the Indian States. If we are to judge by the terms published in the Press on which these States would be willing to enter such a federation, their connexion with British India would for some time be more in the nature of a sentimental than a practical association.

At the same time, we really appreciate the willingness and desire of the States to join the federation and, on the assumption, that such a federation would soon materialise into a corporate body, it would be ridiculous for any one of us to refuse such an offer; and therefore, on behalf of the community I have the honour to represent, I raise my voice in favour of a federal form of government and welcome it as best for the future of India.

With your permission, Sir, I should like to go a little further and say a little more on this. In the creation of this federal government, this consummation of which no one here can foretell, I am afraid that, judging from some of the speeches I have heard, we have in a measure, by

seeking for a federal government first before stabilising our provincial governments, placed the cart before the horse. My conception of a practical measure would be to give India immediately complete provincial autonomy and when the provinces have stabilised themselves, allow them absolute freedom to federate with those States which are willing to enter into association with them, and so form a number of federated units which could eventually combine in an All-India Federation with a strong, responsible and representative central Government.

I am aware there are some States which will refuse to enter into this pact, and perhaps some special provision will have to be made for their affiliation with a federated India on terms acceptable to them. But, whatever the decision of this Conference may be, I am prepared to accept it, as a member of a minority community, for I am wedded to neither one form nor the other of government.

All I ask is that ample provision be made for the development of self-governing institutions in India and that we be given ample power to deliver the goods that we are manufacturing at this Round Table Conference; and at the same time I ask for the adequate and statutory protection and safeguarding of minority interests.

By that, I do not mean the sort of provision that already exists in the Instrument of Instructions in the 1919 Government of India Act, which no Governor has up to date put into operation, nor do I mean any authoritative directions from the Secretary of State. What I desire to express in clear and unmistakable terms is that all minority communities must be afforded full protection, be it by means of a Magna Charta or in any other way, and given a right of appeal to the Central Government or, if necessary, to some higher authority against any infringement by a

scholarships to enable it to educate itself and enter the higher services in larger numbers

Surely these demands are not excessive, when one considers the great economic, military and administrative services rendered by this community to India and the British Empire. If this protection is refused, we sink, if it is granted, we swim, and shall without doubt, play as great a part in the future as we have already done in the past. Indeed, Sir I assure you that the decisions now being taken at this Conference are matters of life and death, literally life and death, for us

Of late years our economic position has steadily deteriorated. Nevertheless so far as it is in our power, we are endeavouring to make it possible for the more promising of our younger generation to receive the education and training which will fit them to compete with the members of other Indian communities. But—and this is a point which I would ask all present to consider dispassionately—the deterioration in our economic condition is due very largely to no fault of our own, but to a deliberate policy on the part of Government.

The members of other communities are now in a position to undertake many of the duties which have fallen to us in the past, and particularly in that sphere of work which hitherto has provided my community with its main employment—I mean the Railways. It was inevitable, of course, that the competition of other Indians for the posts which we held in these and other services should become more and more strenuous as education spread, but we are suffering under the dread conviction that, as a small and poor community, we are being sacrificed to the demands of other more powerful communities, and I repeat again, not

communities whose attachment to India is in any more real or deep than our own.

If our experience of the past few years is to continue, indeed, I can see no hope for us. And there is another thing I want to say with all the seriousness and emphasis I can command, and it is this, the treatment accorded to the Anglo-Indian community, small as it is, but with a record of consistent and devoted loyalty to India and Britain will be a touch-stone by which the quality of Indian and British statesmanship and equality will be judged in the future. We can be dispossessed of all that we have, and truly ruined, and dispersed as a community. That can be done quite easily. But if it is done, it will be done to the everlasting discredit of the two countries to which we belong. I do not want to make a begging appeal to retain as privileges the Government posts and other benefits which we have enjoyed in the past by virtue of service, tradition and fitness; rather I want to ask if it is not possible to give us something in the nature of a "Bill of Rights", to embody in the fundamental document of the new Indian Constitution, a declaration with all the authority of India and Great Britain behind it, to the effect that we shall not be expropriated from our employments and the other positions, which we have created by our labour and our service, merely because we are partly Indian and partly European. In short, I want to ensure that a reformed India will not result in a deformed Anglo-India.

We are not before you as beggars, but as suitors in a just cause; an Indian community devoted to our Motherland but, it must be admitted, under some suspicion because of our unflinching loyalty and devotion in the past to our Fatherland. Our bitter experience has forced us to

the conviction that nothing less than that for which I am now asking will be of any use to us, namely, a solemn declaration in the fundamental document of the Constitution, that we shall be allowed full access to all the work for which we are fitted, and that we, as a community, shall be given the opportunity of playing our part in the future development of India, military, political and cultural as well as economic.

Sir, let me end on the note on which I began. My people and I are Indians, but Indians whose roots are deep not only in the soil and traditions of India, but in the soil and history of this country, where we are meeting to-day.

We are a synthesis of India and Britain as no other people are or can be, and I would like to remind my Indian kinsmen that it was a man of my own community, the great poet and statesman Louis DeRozio, who, more than a hundred years ago, long before any of the developments of modern days could possibly have been foreseen, woke from its long sleep the lyre of the Indian Muse with the noble poem, which opens with the stirring and filial declamation :

“ Harp of my land, which mouldering long hath hung ”  
and ends with a touching appeal for

“ My fallen country, one kind thought from thee. ”  
and this is what I ask for Sir, a kind and generous gesture, and this is what I ask of my Indian friends, and this is what I ask of my Indian Princes, whom for a generation we have served nobly and well—a kind and generous gesture not, thank God, for my fallen country, but for my country resurgent.

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## H. H. THE CHIEF OF SANGLI

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Mr. Chairman: I associate myself wholeheartedly with the speakers who have preceded me in their expression of sympathy and devotion to His Majesty the King, of the sympathy of the Ruling Princes and Chiefs of India with the aspirations of British India and of hope and faith that, in the solution of the issues which confront us, we shall be animated by the goodwill, patience and wisdom which His Majesty commended, and in doing so, I feel sure I am echoing the sentiments of those who no less than others are amongst the Rulers of States.

As regards the main question that we are discussing to-day, namely, whether the future Constitution of India should be unitary or federal, Their Highnesses who have spoken before me have already shown that a United and Greater India can only be created with the consent and association of the sovereign States of India with the Government of British India. I need not therefore deal with that point. I would only say that if federation be agreed upon, those whom I represent would be willing to assist in the achievement of that goal.

At this stage, it might be well to state in broad outline the problem of the smaller States. Their essential features are identical with those of the other States, namely, (1) they are not British territory, their subjects are not British subjects and they are not governed by the law of British India, and (2) the British Crown is responsible for their external relations and territorial integrity. They all manage their internal affairs and maintain their troops or police forces, except the very small estates and jagirs. For international purposes, the territories of these States are in the same position as those of British India, and their subjects are in the same position as British subjects. These facts

establish that their rights and indeed their interests, are identical with those of the rest of the States

It will thus be plain that the methods of All India co operation that may be devised by the Conference would apply to these States. It is true that some of the States—especially those which are included in the group known as estates, jagirs and others—are very small, and their cases will require investigation in order to fit them in the scheme that might be ultimately framed, in order that they might enjoy all its benefits in common with the rest of the States

In this connection I may remark that the importance of the smaller States is not to be judged by the size of individual units, but by the aggregate figures of their area and population, their widespread territorial distribution and their large number. I would ask this House to remember that if a little over twenty States be excepted, no one of the remaining States has a population exceeding half a million and yet they include in their number States which have as ancient a lineage, as proud a history, as large a jurisdiction and as rich potentialities of development as any other. They further share in the general political awakening the stirrings of new life and new hopes or in His Majesty's words—"the quickening and growth in ideals and aspirations—which characterise the whole country, and they are animated by the common ideal of being placed firmly on the road to the political stature which is their due. The fact that His Majesty the King Emperor has emphasized the wisdom of paying due regard to the just claims of minorities at once shows his deep interest in them and inspires the hope that the legitimate claims of all States regardless of size will receive due recognition and that, at this birth of a new history, the foundations will be well and truly laid, and an enduring union of the States and British India will be brought into being

FOURTH DAY, NOV. 19.

H. II. THE MAHARAJA OF PATIALA

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Mr. Prime Minister : In rising from my place at this comparatively late stage of the general discussion, I feel I have somewhat of an advantage over the speakers who have preceded me. This is the third day of the general discussion which, I am sure, we must all agree, has greatly clarified our ideas. It remains, therefore, for me to deal with those points only which I think might be clearly brought out, in order to summarise what I take to be the general view of the Indian States Delegation.

My brother Princes have already laid stress upon the intimacy of those personal ties with His Majesty's person and throne, of which I and every Prince are so proud—ties which bind the Princes of India to the Crown of Britain. These ties remain indissoluble, in the truest sense, links of Empire. But I would point out that they operate in two ways. They constitute, on the one hand, a link between the Indian States and Great Britain. On the other hand, they constitute a no less important link between the Indian States and British India, since they bind the two halves of India, politically distinct though they may be, into the higher unity, which comes of common attachment to a common Sovereign. It is my earnest hope, as I am sure that is the hope of all my brother Princes, that the dual operation of these bonds will play its own great part in the birth of that United India for the achievement of which we are all striving.



I make no secret of my own belief that the connection between my own country and the British Commonwealth is one that has been designed by Providence for the benefit of humanity at large. India herself comprises within her borders no less than one fifth of the human race. If, as I hope and pray, she remains within the British Empire, as a partner equal in dignity with her sister commonwealth, there will result such a free and voluntary co-operation between East and West as the world has never known. What may such an alliance not achieve for the peaceful progress of mankind at large? The culture of the East like the culture of the West, has its own characteristic contribution to make. It is for us here to see that our strengths are jointly cast into the same scale—the scale of justice, of progress, of co-operation.

Like all my brother Princes, I have been greatly impressed by the eloquent appeal made to us by Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, when he opened this general discussion, that we should recognise we are Indians first and Princes afterwards. May I, with all earnestness, say how readily we respond to that appeal? We yield to none in our devotion to India, our motherland. But may I also point out that by remaining Princes, we do not cease to be Indians. Our Order is supposed, in certain respects at least, to be conservative. I should myself prefer to say that we are conservators. We feel indeed that we are the conservators of a great tradition, of an ancient civilisation and of a proud culture.

At a time when the dynamic, machine-made civilisation of the West threatened to overwhelm much of our ancient Indian culture, it was the Indian States which proved themselves the conservators of the traditional arts and crafts.

It was within the Indian States that Indian talent, whether in the sphere of arts or of politics, for long, found their feet, and indeed perhaps for a time, their only scope.

It was within the Indian States, to speak of the past alone; that men like Sir Salar Jung, Sir T. Madhav Rao, and Sir Seshadri Iyer, discovered opportunities of self-realisation, of work for the motherland, that were not available to them in British India. And to-day, is it not the case that the Indian Princes can count, among their Ministers and advisers, statesmen, of whom the whole of our country may well be proud? I feel strongly that the Indian States have it in their power to make a contribution no less valuable to the Great India of the future, than the contribution of British India herself. Nor is this contribution confined to a historic continuity of culture, a proud sense of citizenship, a solidity of political institutions transcending differences of caste and creed.

The Indian States can contribute something else which until the millennium arrives, is no less important to the life of a country than the arts of peace namely, the capacity for self-defence. It is in the Indian States that there still flourish most prominently such organised military life and tradition as still exist in India, and I suggest that in the future, may be found amongst the most practically valuable of the contributions that the Indian States can make to India, and through India to the Empire.

Mr. Prime Minister, I believe I am speaking for my brother Princes as much as for myself, when I say we all look forward to the birth of a greater India; whether that greater India will take the form of a United States of India, we may know more clearly before this Conference comes to the conclusion of its work.

Our readiness to work for this ideal, and to facilitate its achievement, has already been made manifest; and I am happy to think that both His Majesty's Government in England and my colleagues, the political leaders of British Indian thought, fully appreciate the anxiety of the Indian States that India shall rise to her full stature within the British Commonwealth of Nations. I believe, and I am happy to think that my belief is shared by many, that the readiest and the quickest method of achieving this enhanced status and dignity, lies along the road of federation. For federation I am prepared to work, knowing that only through federation can the Indian States join with British India in the formation of the greater India which we all desire.

Here I think, it is necessary to be clear in our ideas: for it is not only the future of our own States and our own peoples, but the future of India as a whole that is involved. I believe that, at every step, we should reflect upon the immense issues concerned.

What do we, Indian Princes mean, when we say we are prepared to join with British India in constituting an All-India federation? Let me say first what we do not mean. We do not, we cannot contemplate, any severance in the ties which bind India to the Empire. The maintenance of the British connection is the fundamental assumption of our whole position. In the next place, we desire to *make it plain that outside the matters of common concern, we shall preserve our internal autonomy intact without any interference on the part of British India, whatever the constitution of British India may be, just as the British Indian unit of the federation will be entitled to manage those affairs, which, are exclusively its own without inter-*

ference on our part. To put it otherwise, by federation we mean an arrangement entered into by us and by British India jointly, under which, while British India manages those affairs that exclusively concern it, and while the Indian States manage those affairs that exclusively concern them and while the Crown discharges such functions in India as are reserved to it, the Crown, British India, and the Indian States join together in a system which provides for the joint management and joint control of matters that jointly concern the two sides of India.

The task of devising such a system is not merely difficult and delicate, but involves certain assumptions that I desire to bring out. No federation has, I am sure ever come into existence, without the rights of the federating units being first precisely known. Now, so far as the Indian States are concerned, these rights are in some doubt.

Our own view, the view of the Princes, is that our rights are founded upon our treaties and engagements, that our relationship with the Crown is an ascertainable relationship, the terms of which depend upon the element of consent. The Indian States Committee has challenged this view of ours. Are our own legal advisers right—some of the most eminent Counsels in London—or are the members of the Indian States Committee right? How can we federate, until we know what rights and what duties we bring to the federation? When, therefore, we express our willingness, and, indeed, our desire to enter a federal arrangement, are we not entitled to ask that there should be a prior ascertainment of our rights, not indeed by executive action, but by judicial decision, by the decision of the highest judicial tribunal, to which His Majesty's Govern-

ment and the Indian States may agree to refer the question.

We feel that such ascertainment of our rights runs in no way counter to our desire for the higher unity of India but will indeed directly facilitate the formation of that federal arrangement, through which we believe that unity can best be achieved.

Again, it is impossible for federation to come about, unless those who are parties to federation are prepared to pay the necessary price. Sacrifices will be necessary ; sacrifices by British India as well as by ourselves. Are we prepared to face these sacrifices ? For my own part, I believe that we are. But let us be under no illusion that sacrifice will not be necessary. And while I do not think that there can be any question, for example, of our losing that internal autonomy which each State cherishes, I do think that we shall find the actual process of working out a federation, one which demands great unselfishness, great patience, great patriotism.

Are the Indian Princes afraid then of what the future holds ? Speaking for myself I can answer frankly, that we are not. We are proud of being Indians, we are proud of our motherland. But we are also proud of the historic position of our States. We are fully conscious of the trend of thought in British India, indeed, I think that the trend of thought has, in many respects served to modify in some degree our own institutions within our States. At the same time, we believe it is not essential that lines of progress within the Indian States and in British India should follow exactly the same course. Each State, with its historic consciousness, should, I feel, seek its own particular form of self-expression, consistently with contributing to the higher purposes of the federation.

And may I here say, in all earnestness, that I deprecate even casual references to the possibility that the Indian States may be obliterated by the rising tide of democracy.

Mr. Prime Minister, the Indian States have survived many cataclysms: they may survive many more. In my view, it is just their strength and vitality, their sturdy vigour which has carried them through so many trials, which gives them their greatest value as elements in the future polity of India, and as links in those chains of common loyalty, common affection and common interest, which I pray may ever bind together Britain and India in the great British Commonwealth of free nations.

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## DR. B. S. MOONJE

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I should like to begin my speech by expressing my heart-felt gratefulness to Lord Peel for the noble and courageous lead that he gave yesterday by saying that we should speak frankly and sincerely. He may be legitimately proud of having brought a contribution of sincerity to the business before this Conference, and for having paid this Conference the compliment of frankness. I can assure him that, in my speech, he will not be disappointed; he will have the most frank, sincere and honest views of a man who has proved his loyalty to the British Empire, even running the risk of losing his life in doing so, when he was a young man and comparatively unknown, and when he showed his loyalty in the actual fire of war. It is such a man who now speaks frankly and sincerely and may appear to be a rebel at the present time.

I should like to dispose of certain points which Lord Peel made in dealing with the speech of Mr. Jayakar. Lord Peel complained that Mr. Jayakar in his speech did not appreciate the services of the many young British people, who go to India and give their devoted service in the prime of their life to the uplift of that country. I do not know whether Mr. Jayakar appreciates those services or not, but, in any case, I fully appreciate the services which the British people give. I may give an illustration of how I appreciate their services. There is a farmer in a village who keeps a cow. He gives his devoted attention and his devoted service to that cow, so that every morning he may have an ample supply of fresh milk for his tea. I may also make a comparison with the devoted service

which a landlord or malgazar pays to his malgazari village. India is the malgazari village of England, and as such I appreciate that devoted attention is given to the malgazari village, so that the greatest resources possible may be obtained from that source.

Lord Peel also complained that Mr. Jayakar charged the British people with having monopolies in British India, and I was pleased to hear the definition of the monopoly which Lord Peel gave. If that definition is correct and if practical effect is given to it, then I, coming from the great Hindu race, have nothing to fear. Efficiency, competence, intelligence and capacity for work—if that be the test for the loaves and fishes of life, if that be the test for a man's worth to be known, I, coming from the great Hindu race, have nothing to fear.

Unfortunately, however, it is not that. Lord Peel says, "I submit that there is no monopoly, legal, constitutional or of any other kind, except that monopoly which is obtained by skill, energy and commercial success." I wish that were the fact. In the history of the British Empire in India, I wish it were a fact; for, had that been the case, I would be the last man to complain, for I would have no reason to complain. Efficiency, capacity for work, intelligence—if that be the test, no man from the Hindu race would ever have reason to complain or would ever have complained.

As regards the monopoly, I might bring to the notice of my friend, Lord Peel, something which was written by one of his own people, a life of Sir Bartle Frere, Governor of Bombay, written by Mr. Martin. He gives a history of how the Indian shipping industry was killed and the present British India Steam Navigation Company brought into being. A Mr. Mackinnon went to India, without means,



British statesman say, "I shall take time by the forelock and be an exception this time to the rule of the British being always five minutes too late and doing a thing when all grace is out of it." I expected that the British people would rise to the occasion and say, when we come here to-day to give a frank expression of our opinion, "If you prove your capacity, if you prove worthy, immediate Dominion Status will be given to you." In capacity, in efficiency, it cannot be said that the representatives of the Hindus have been found wanting. (A Delegate: of India.) Yes. Hindu means all India. An Indian may be a Hindu or may be a member of any other religion, but in what I am saying now, he is a Hindu. I am glad the delegate reminded me of that. I am not an Englishman and therefore I am accustomed to say Hindus.

What is the present situation in India? Lord Irwin may say that he is not going to give immediate Dominion Status, and the British people may say that they are not going to give immediate Dominion Status. We are not here to know whether the British Government is going to give Dominion Status or not. We have come here, as a mark of long-standing friendship, as a mark of long-standing connection, to tell the British people frankly and sincerely—taking the lead of Lord Peel—what India thinks and what is the situation at present, so that you may exercise your independent brain and your independent thought and make up your minds how to proceed in the present situation.

The situation in India I shall briefly describe. There are Indians in the Civil Service, there are Indians in the Medical Service, there are Indians in the Military Service, and their wives and their sons and their brothers and their nearest relatives are taking part actively in the national

movement and are going to jail and are suffering all kinds of indignities and oppression. Young boys, young kids, young girls, young women, old women, old men—all are coming forward to express their heart-felt feeling that the time has come, and that India can never be satisfied with anything—less than Dominion Status or full responsible Government. I will come soon to what I mean by Dominion Status or responsible Government.

They are suffering all kinds of indignities and oppression. I myself went twice to jail in the struggle for freedom, in my desire to make India as free as any Dominion in the Empire. If further sacrifice is needed, this man will not be found wanting when the time comes, as he was not found wanting during the Boer War and during the last war. If I could offer the sacrifice of my life for the Empire during real emergency, I should be a thousand times more ready to offer my life for sacrifice for the uplift of my country.

British people think, and perhaps British Officers in India think, that they can put down the movement, that they can demoralise the people. They think that, by a display of force, they will cause all this trouble to disappear. The time has passed—I am speaking frankly and sincerely, and that time will never come again, when any show of physical force is going to cow the Indian people.

I have seen with my own eyes Officers with police and military, faced by thousands of people, children, boys women, men, who said "All-right, you do the worst, we are prepared to be shot down." While being shot down, they will run away, but when the shooting stops, they will come again. In the organ called *Young India* Miss Slade, one of the daughters of the British people, a daughter of Admiral Slade, who took part in the last war,

writes as to the ways of British oppression, how the British people are aspiring to kill the movement and how it does not succeed.

I shall only quote: "Lathi blows on head, chest, stomach and joints, thrusts with lathis in private parts, abdominal regions; stripping of men naked before beating: tearing off loin cloths and thrusting of sticks into private parts; pressing and squeezing of the private parts—the most sensitive part of a man, I will not name it—till a man becomes unconscious; dragging of wounded men into salt water; riding of horses over men as they lie or sit on the ground; thrusting of pins and thorns into men's bodies, sometimes even when they are unconscious; beating of men after they had become unconscious, and other vile things too many to relate, besides foul language and blasphemy, calculated to hurt as much as possible the most sacred feelings of the Satyagrahis. The whole affair is one of the most devilish, cold blooded and unjustifiable in the history of any nation" So says Miss Slade, the disciple of Mahatma Gandbi, the modern author of love, non-violence and truth. That disciple, an English lady, says these things. She has seen these things with her own eyes, and frankly taking the lead of Lord Peel, and frankly and sincerely and honestly says what she has seen.

This is going on in India at the present moment, and this has been going on for more than six months, and yet the movement has gone on. As I have said before, when shooting does take place, people run away for the time being, but as soon as the shooting stops, people again throng and do the same thing. I should have thought they should not run away, but let us imagine the progeny of the races which fought wars, which waged wars, defeated enemies, being disarmed, for the last 80 years

or so—three generations of disarmament! The Moghuls came, conquered India, defeated us, established their Empire; but it did not enter their brains to maintain their Empire by disarming the whole nation. It is this thing that has gone right into the bottom of our hearts. I could quite understand it, if anybody says if you have a rifle and if your opponent has a rifle, and then he runs away, then you can call him a coward. But cowards they are not, because these people, seeing that their own people are being shot down, return to the same place to do the same thing, simply because they have no rifles of their own. That is the crux of the situation. The pith of what I am saying is that if the British Officials in India think that this movement can be cowed down or submerged by any kind of repression, they are mistaken. It is impossible that that movement should be crushed. We have gone through it. My grand-father has passed through all these troubles before. We know in our history what a repression we have gone through before much more serious than the present repression. We have gone through that, and we, Mahrattas and Sikhs, standing together have withstood the most unimaginable atrocities that human nature could think of.

The sum and total of what I say is this. This is the parting of the ways for the British people and ourselves. We have been in association, according to my calculation, for about a hundred years, according to somebody else's calculation about a hundred and five years. It is this that has prompted me to come to this Round Table Conference against all the desires of people, against the condemnation of friends, with whom I have worked for the last twenty five or thirty years, against the assertion in private and in public that he is a traitor who goes to the Round Table

Conference. They say, "We believed that he was a sound soldier of his Motherland, but at the time, when the real examination-mark man comes up, at that time he was found out, and now he is a traitor who goes to the Round Table Conference."

I am risking all that thing. I am risking everything that is dear to a man's heart in this life, and for one thing: for the some little affection there is for the connection that has been established for the last 125 years. It was that little affection that made me take risks in my youth according to the promptings of youth in these days. According to the promptings of a more sober man at a more advanced age, I am taking that risk of losing everything that a man holds dear in his life. If I had looked at things from a personal point of view, what a simple thing it would have been for me. People would have said, "There is no greater patriot than Dr. Moonje at this time in India." But I have come here, and I am so glad that Lord Peel has anticipated the promptings in my heart to speak here sincerely and honestly and frankly.

Now that I have said all these things, what is it that India wants, and what is it that you are asked to do? India wants Dominion Status. India has an ambition of her own. India had, according to her own ambitions, established her own Empires, and of course, those who establish Empires lose Empires. It is not a very extraordinary thing to lose an Empire, because only those can lose Empires who have got the capacity to establish them. But India has, in her consideration, for the connection of a hundred or a hundred and fifty years, set the line.

The last straw is being put on the camel's back. Let us see if the British people have the courage to put the last straw on the camel's back before the camel's back:

breaks. What is it that India wants, and what is it that we are asking you to do? We want Dominion Status.

I am not speaking from a constitutional point of view. When we meet in the sub-committees from the constitutional point of view, we can talk about it scientifically and constitutionally and historically, but here I am speaking from a layman's point of view. What is it that India wants? India wants to be a Dominion within the British Empire, so that India may also be in a position to own the Empire as its own. If I possess a house, I feel a kind of love for that house, I wish, and India desires, that in consideration for that connection India should be allowed to feel that the Empire also is its home. It is in this sense that I am using the term Dominion Status. I know that we are different from you as regards race, though ultimately you and we are one—we belong to the Aryan race. At the present moment, we are black people and you are white people, so perhaps you may think that you and we are quite different, and you may also think that, being different people, is it wise to give Dominion Status to them, so that they might stand up against you and sit on your chest again to-morrow, and might do something which will not be very pleasing to you. You might feel that. You have seen that past history of India. If that had been the intention of the Indian people, the history of our connection with the British nation would have been quite different.

There are people here who know that, three days after the Great War was declared, I volunteered my services, but, being over age, unfortunately I could not be accepted. Then I volunteered that, from my little Province, I would raise 50,000 soldiers for the war, provided that the racial bar and the racial monopoly in the Army was removed. If the mind of India had been different, you would not have

received that offer, but we said, "This is a time of emergency and difficulty for the British people, and it is not our comprehension of our duty and of our conscience that we should create troubles for the British people at such a time; they are also human beings like us. After seeing them through their difficulties, the God in them will be roused enough to see that our people, though black in colour, are the same as their own."

I have not come here as a beggar. It will be a good thing if you, of your own accord, would say "We offer you Dominion Status." If fear or suspicion may not lead you to make that friendly gesture, then I say we will not be satisfied with anything less than full responsible Government. I want to be as free in my country as an Englishman in England, as a Canadian in Canada, as a New Zealander in New Zealand, and as an Australian in Australia. Nothing less than that is going to satisfy me. That is one thing.

The second thing which I shall never tolerate is the saying that Indian people cannot defend their own country and therefore the British people must undertake the responsibility of defending India.

We shall be satisfied only with full responsible government. You must look at it from the psychological and physiological point of view. There are things which are known as foreign bodies. When a foreign body enters into the body politic, if the body politic reacts in a certain way, that foreign body may remain in the body politic isolated; but if the body politic does not react favourably, then the foreign body acts as a poison and poisons the whole body politic. Either absorb us into yourselves, so that we can say we are part of the Empire along with you, or we shall say "You are a foreign people, but we shall allow you to isolate yourselves." If something on those lines is not

done, it is not very difficult to prophesy that that foreign body will be a source of immense trouble, will poison the whole body politic, until either it is cast out or the body politic itself is destroyed.

It is for this reason that I have come here and spoken freely; frankly, and sincerely, and I am grateful to Lord Peel for having given me the lead. This is the frank expression of a man who has been known up to now as a patriot in his own country. Now he is called a traitor to his own country for having come here. I would commend to the British Delegation the amount of responsibility that lies on their head.

It is a question whether India shall be complementary to England or opposite to England. In the latter case, there may be constant warfare, constant trouble and constant repression so that there will be peace on neither side in India.

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## SARDAR UJJAL SINGH

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Mr. Chairman: We are assembled here to find a solution of one of the most difficult and complex problems, which any assembly was ever faced with. We were reminded yesterday by Lord Peel that we should proceed with caution. I fully agree with the noble Lord that we should take all factors into careful consideration but we must face and surmount difficulties and not succumb to them. I need not repeat what many of my friends have already said about the grave situation in India.

I will only say that rapid progress may lead to some trouble, but hesitation and half-hearted measures are bound to lead to great disorder.

We cannot forget that India at this moment is impatient and restless to breathe the air of freedom. This impatience has led the leaders of the greatest and most powerful political party in the country to adopt means which we, I believe, sadly deplore. But we Indians deplore no less the present state of things with its breaking of heads and the sending to prison men, who in a free country, would have commanded the respect of the proudest nations. Both these methods are a counsel of despair. This unfortunate sad state of affairs in India calls for the rarest courage, wisdom and statesmanship of the highest order. In the success of this historic Conference lies the good, not only of India or of England, but of the whole world, for one-third of the human race in ferment cannot but produce uncertainty and restlessness in the whole.

Although the problem is difficult and its solution imperative, there is no ground for pessimism. On the

other hand, here is a clear indication of determination on the part of every section of this historic assembly to find a ready solution for it. By inaugurating the opening ceremony of this Conference, His Majesty the King Emperor has given practical proof of his anxiety to see the success of our deliberations. We should express our gratitude to His Majesty, not by words, but by the results which he expects us to achieve. The fact, Sir, that with your multifarious duties and momentous responsibilities you have been able to find time to preside over our deliberations is another proof of the determination of the British people to find a solution to this problem.

We, Indian Delegates, have already staked our reputation in the eyes of our fellow countrymen. We cannot—we dare not—go back to India without carrying with us the solution which will satisfy the aspirations of our people.

The Indian Princes, in their magnificent speeches, have made it abundantly clear that they are not only anxious to adjust their relations with British India, but that they are equally desirous to see India occupying her rightful position among the proud nations of the world.

When the best brains of England and the versatile brains of India are bent upon the solution of the problem, there is no difficulty which may not be overcome.

What is the nature of our problem? We have been asked here to give an expression of a limited character on the question of federal or unitary government.

Before expressing my opinion on this specific proposition, on behalf of the Sikh community, which I have the honour to represent here, I make bold to say that, from the point of view of British India, our immediate business is to obtain the substance of independence, a status of partnership in the British Empire and a full measure of

responsible government in autonomous Provinces under a responsible central government. If that had not been the main issue, perhaps the Conference would not have seen the light of day.

The immediate realisation of this desire is no doubt full of difficulties, and if there were no difficulties, we would not have been here putting our heads together and coming to close grips with the problem. Lord Peel said yesterday that the Simon Commission Report, so far as the Provinces were concerned, is a revolutionary document, in so far as, in the Provinces, diarchy is done away with and a unitary responsible government is established instead. I admit that the word "diarchy" has been taken away from the constitution but diarchy in substance is replaced in the official Members of the Cabinet. I do not desire to enter into any discussion at this stage of the various proposals, but with all deference I submit that no amount of autonomy in the Provinces is going to satisfy Indian public opinion unless responsibility is established in the central government. Representing, as I do the important Sikh minority I cannot shut my eyes to what realisation of full responsible government would mean to a minority.

If we were all to forget that we were members of different communities, and were prepared to sacrifice our communal interest at the altar of nationhood or nationalism, I for one would not have asked for any consideration for my community; but unfortunately communal interests are still dear to us and require adjustment in a spirit of give and take. The Sikhs—who were, I need not remind you the masters of the Punjab not many years ago and who, since the British advent have maintained their military prestige in the various theatres of war in Asia, Africa and Europe, and who, during the Great War, supplied no less

than 89,000 combatant recruits besides 30,000 already in service, and who still constitute the most gallant element of the Indian Army—cannot remain indifferent to their interests. I beg of you not to ignore the just claims of a community which is to be the backbone of India as a Dominion. I need only remind you of the words of Edward Thomson, who has written a book on the reconstruction of India. He says that if the Sikhs remain loyal to a federated India, the North Western border is safe against Afghanistan, and if India remains a Dominion, her shores are secured by the British Navy.

I am anxious, therefore, to be assured of a rightful position for my community. In fact, the test of a constitution is the measure of security it provides for the minorities. But I am not without hope that, along with other difficulties, we shall be able to solve this problem, in a friendly spirit, with a common desire to see India occupying a proud position among the countries of the world.

The problems of defence and the maintenance of law and order were mentioned yesterday as the big problems which presented peculiar difficulties. I am of opinion that, with the solution of the minorities problem and with the introduction of a system of responsible government which will satisfy general public opinion in India, the question of law and order becomes very easy. Indians in general are more peace-loving than Westerners, and if their legitimate demands are acceded to, there is no reason why there should be any more disorder.

I admit that the defence problem is more difficult, but it is made more difficult, partly from the peculiar nature of India's frontier, and partly by the exclusion, until recently of Indians from higher ranks and positions of responsibility in the Indian Army. I hold the view that India cannot.

be a full-fledged Dominion, until she is able to assume control of the Army, but that does not imply that she cannot have Dominion Status and responsibility in other spheres of Governmental activity.

The question of defence—and along with it the relations with foreign countries—can for a period of time be entrusted to the Viceroy, assisted by an advisory board of Indians; but to seek to remove the control of the Army from the Indian legislature and to vest it in a foreign body for all time to come is to postpone the attainment of full Dominion Status by India until Doomsday.

What is immediately needed is to accelerate the pace of Indianisation in the higher ranks of the Army. It is inconceivable that the right material will not be available, or that any peculiar difficulties will present themselves in providing non-British commands.

In spite of general disarmament and physical degeneration, for which the Arms Act in India is mostly responsible, the martial races in the Punjab like the Sikhs and Muslims and the Mahrattas in the South can still supply a valuable element for the higher ranks.

During the Great War, the Viceroy's commissioned officers gave proof of their capacity for leadership, and there is no reason to think that when Indians are given the opportunity of holding positions in the higher command they will not exhibit every capacity for leadership.

There is another question with regard to the Army which I desire to bring to the notice of this assembly. It is not quite clear to me why such a large garrison of 60,000 British troops, is maintained at such a heavy cost, apparently for the preservation of internal peace and order. One British soldier costs four times as much as an Indian soldier.

*Sir Pheroze Sethna* :—Five times as much.

A British soldier costs four to five times as much as an Indian soldier, and it is difficult to see why so large a garrison should be maintained for the apparent reason of internal peace and order. The Indian Police can well be trusted in times of disorder and outbreaks to discharge their responsibilities and duties honestly, and there is no reason why Indian soldiers, who are more disciplined should not be able to discharge their duties honestly and conscientiously.

The Army question, instead of offering any insurmountable difficulties, becomes easy of solution, if the dead weight of expenditure on British troops is removed and the Indianisation of the higher ranks in the Army honestly pushed through.

The problem of the Indian States has presented great difficulty, but is fortunately now nearer solution. With the acceptance of the idea of a greater India, united in diversity, and with the willingness of the Princes to join that federation as free contracting parties, that problem is nearer solution. While the idea of a federation, in which self-governing provinces in British India, on the one hand, and the Indian States, on the other, will fit themselves into a whole for the realisation of common ideals, in an attractive one, it is still an idea which cannot immediately mature. At the outset we can so frame our constitution as to leave the door open to the Indian States to come in, but in coming to a decision on the exact type of federation, we must not forget that India is now rapidly advancing towards nationhood. Nothing should be done which might stifle that process of unification and nationhood; we must guard against any disintegrating tendencies on the part of various units.

Nothing should be done, in particular, to weaken the authority or the credit of the Central Government, and for this reason, I am strongly of opinion that, after distributing as large powers as possible to the provinces to develop on their own lines, a reserve of power must remain with the Central Government. We must remember that in deciding to have a federal type of Government, we are reversing the natural process, so far as the provinces are concerned. The federation of once independent states has usually been an intermediary process towards unification, but here we are trying to create separatist tendencies. History should be our guide, and we should evolve a type of system which may not be strictly unitary, but which is suited to our peculiar conditions and traditions.

The eyes of the world are turned towards this Conference. The fate of one fifth of the human race hangs on the deliberations round this historic table. The pledges of British statesmen are on their trial, the patriotism and good sense of various communities is to be tested. I only pray and hope that we may all rise equal to this great occasion, and that the fruits of our labours may lead to a happier and more contented India and to a greater England.

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## SIR A. P. PATRO

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After such a circuit of words, praises and emotions, for me to contribute anything would only be wearisome and I am sure I should be trying the patience of this assembly if I were to make a long speech. My object this morning is to place before you certain business propositions derived from experience and the knowledge of the working of institutions which were inaugurated under the Montford Scheme, with regard to relations between the Provinces and the Centre, and what should be done with a view to easing the situation and for creating facilities for the smooth working of responsibility at the Centre and in the Provinces.

I have listened very carefully to the very instructive and interesting address of the representative of the Conservative group, Lord Peel. I appreciate his great sincerity and frankness, and he is speaking true to the creed of the great party to which he belongs. We are also in Southern India styled a Conservative party, and a reactionary party by a certain section of the extreme nationalists. As a Conservative party, we hold fast to the traditions of the past, and as nationalists we want to progress with all other political sections of India.

It will be interesting for you, therefore, to hear what the legislature and the Party, which I have honour to represent and to lead, has to say on the nature of the practical working, the defects and the difficulties of the system of dyarchy. It would be mere waste of time, however, for me at this stage to go seriatim into all the



defects and difficulties of the present situation. I will only picture to you briefly what it is that, from the point of view of the Party I represent seems desirable. I represent a party which consists, not merely of the intelligentsia of the country, but of representatives of the countryside, agriculturists and small landholders—all classes who have a stake in the country.

The Legislative Council of Madras, which co-operated whole-heartedly with the Indian Statutory Commission, has, in communicating the report of the Committee to the Secretary of State, resolved emphatically that any grant of political autonomy in the provinces will be a mere shell without substance, unless responsibility is introduced in the Central Government. The Justice Party, at a great meeting held two days after this report was submitted, has also unanimously placed on record its sincere desire that the next step in advance should be responsibility in the Centre, and that India should be placed in a position not inferior to that of the States which comprise the British Commonwealth of Nations.

I may also refer to another view expressed by this great movement in Southern India, Bombay and the Central Provinces, the Non-Brahmin movement.

It is the sincere wish of the Non-Brahmin Party, guided and controlled by experience and knowledge of the working of the institutions of the country, to have full responsibility at the centre, and a meeting of the All India Non-Brahmin Party, held in Poona and presided over by myself, has resolved that it shall stand for full responsibility at the Centre, subject to such safeguards for a temporary period, as may be essential, and that India shall be placed in line with the

other States which comprise the British Commonwealth of Nations.

We base this on the experience we have hitherto acquired. The system of dyarchy was acquired and worked with varying degrees of success in the different provinces. If, in any province, it has not worked successfully it is not because of want of capacity in the individuals, but because they refused to work a system or an organisation which did not fulfil their expectations, and which was so full of defects that they would not work it whole-heartedly.

That being so, I would submit to this Conference that the success of the dyarchic experiment in India has not been, as it has been represented to be, inferior to any other institution. We have worked successfully in India, we have gained experience and knowledge. What then is the next step to be taken, when we have proved that the dyarchic system has been successful, though it has been universally condemned by sections of people who did not dare the responsibility, who did not put their shoulders to the wheel and carry out the administration?

Those who did not have the painful experience of working the institution are most loud in condemning the system. I am not one of those who think that it deserved such universal condemnation. Like every other institution, its defects are many, its difficulties are many, but it has worked successfully, as we have proved in the Madras Presidency. I would ask this Conference to bear with me, while I point out how far this system has been successful in improving the condition of the countryside and in helping the minorities and others. One of the great problems, which this Conference will have to consider, is whether the past can be taken as a sure guide for the future. We must test our conclusions and the facts. The Legislative

Councils all over the country addressed themselves to what is known as nation-building, Departments were set up which served to improve the condition of the people of the rural areas, the depressed classes have been helped and steps have been taken to see that provision was made for their redemption from ignorance and cruel injustice.

The problem of the minorities was not neglected. Every time, when questions relating to the rights and liberties of the minorities came up, the legislature stood firm and did not allow any injustice to them. In the matter of discriminatory legislation, by means of interpellations or resolutions, the House always protested. It was the same in the matter of finance, when the revenues of the Presidency were sought to be curtailed. I refer to the matter of excise revenue, when an attempt was made to deal with the problem of temperance. When the question was brought forward, the Council stood firmly for the policy of temperance and yet did not yield to a curtailment of the revenues of the country. While everyone sympathised with the advance of temperance, we felt that it must come gradually. I bring forward this illustration, because it is common among certain sections of the Nationalists to say that there should be total prohibition. Any amount of talk has gone on, and it has even been suggested that force should be used. Nevertheless, I give this testimony to show that the practical wisdom and the commonsense of the legislature induced members to stand firm in the matter. They would not be moved by sentiment and emotion, or by appeals to patriotism. They stood firm, and the revenues of the Provinces remained. Therefore, I state this, though it is an unpleasant illustration to show, that in any matter relating to the reduction of the revenue the Legislative Council proved true to their commonsense.

Now I wish to say a word in reference to what the noble lord, Lord Peel, said with reference to the people of India. It is not correct to say that the political shibboleth or the demands for independence or for the repudiation of debt is the desire of India. That is confined to a certain section of the people. Are there not political parties in England to-day who make the most extreme demands? Are there not political parties in the Dominions who take up extreme positions which you and I would not assent to? You may call it Bolshevism or Socialism or anything you like. There are extreme sections of people all over the world.

Therefore, these things should not be taken as anything that should operate to deter the progress of India towards full Self-Government. You should utilise these forces more profitably and harness them for the good of the people. They are symptoms of the great forces working in the country, and it will be high statesmanship, it will be true statesmanship, to control these forces and conciliate these forces and bring about constitutional changes which will keep them within the constitution. It may not be too late now to do that.

As envisaged in the despatch of the Government of India, you cannot take for granted the passive consent of the people for any legislation of any measure you take. It has been visualised in the Despatch of the Government of India that you must have the willing consent of the people if any measure which you are to take is to be successful. Therefore, in such cases, is it not desirable that you should enlist the sympathy and support of all sections of people who are now co-operating with the administration?

Again, in the matter of the relations between the Central Government and Provinces under the dyarchic

system many difficulties were experienced. But we overcame the obstacles in the way and affairs were managed efficiently and satisfactorily as was proved by the testimony of British statesmen. To prove how effective they are I would lay before you facts relating to the internal peace and order which has been maintained during the last ten years. In every Province there were disorders how did the legislatures deal with the matter? Money was expended by the sanction of the Governor in Council to maintain peace and the legislatures co-operated. Responsible and non-responsible Ministers acted in union in the matter of maintaining law and order. Both in law and order in the matter of discriminatory legislation in paying attention to the rights and liberties of minorities the legislatures have proved themselves equal to their task. They have gained experience and they have gained knowledge of what to do in order that that experience may be utilised in the future.

Remember, that whatever may be the changes decided upon here whatever may be the constitution framed for the future we of the agricultural classes expect that the aim and end of every constitutional change will be to improve the lot and the life of the cultivator, the agriculturist and the small industrialist.

If you do not keep in view this aim, and if you only provide for the intelligentsia of the country, you will be sorry for having had anything to do with the modification of the constitution in India. We have vast masses of people to deal with not a few educated classes. Therefore, your reconstruction of the constitution must be consistent with and in co-operation with a spirit of helpfulness to the great masses of India. Please remember that the end and aim of every constitutional change should be to improve the lot and the life of the agriculturist in India.

I would like to remind you that the position in the countryside is not as it was ten years ago. I will not take up time by describing fully to you the position, but I have travelled over all the provinces and visited individually many villages to test the real feeling. To-day there is a great awakening in my community, the community of agriculturists. You could not have imagined ten years ago that there would be such a transformation worked in the villages by the franchise. The organisation set up have had an educative influence and have made the villagers self-reliant. The work of the local bodies, wherever they exist have awakened people to the consciousness of their rights and their liberties and they are working to make those institutions successful and sufficient. In the taluks, you find boards of various kinds doing an immense work to rouse the people to self-consciousness and to enable them to manage their own affairs. There are Boards and Councils, Education Boards and numerous other institutions which are, day in and day out, teaching the people, placing before them their duties and responsibilities, and to-day you will not find a single report which condemns wholesale the valuable work of self-Government that is being carried on in the provinces, the districts and the villages.

I have one more word to say. Judging by British standards, you may ask what is the percentage of attendance, what is the percentage of voters at the polls, and how are the elections conducted? I do not want to go into details. It is sufficient for me to say that to-day there is an interest taken in the election of the Legislative Councils, that you will find that the members of the Councils in most cases are looking forward to the influence of the ballot box. The ballot box controls the destinies of the British Government here to-day. It is beginning to

control affairs in India. So there is this feeling in the country that the people are beginning to manage their own affairs. Why you should refuse to give opportunities for the people to manage their own affairs in the provinces and at the centre I cannot understand. It may be necessary, as my 'Hon. friend Sir' Muhammad Shafi said, to place temporary restrictions—those are details to be considered later—but I do say that you should trust the people who have been able to work well in co-operation in the past. I do not agree with those who hold that there should be revolution in the country.

I believe, and my party believes, in evolution. We say that the introduction of responsible Government at the centre is not a revolution but is a step towards what we ask for—full responsible Government later on. It is a step necessary and essential.

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## MR. MUHAMMAD ALI

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Mr. Chairman: My friend Dr. Moonje, has explained his position as to how he has been called a traitor to his country. I think we are bracketed together here again. As he knows very well, on the day when he and I were to depart from India, black flags were flown to wish us Godspeed, and the wishes of people with whom we had been working all these years were that the boat "Viceroy of India" might prove very unseaworthy. Even when I came to this country, one newspaper in England, which I have helped to stabilise financially, I am very glad to see it has a million sale to-day—the *Daily Herald*, published my photograph and called me a convert—I suppose a convert from patriotism to treachery. There is in Parliament, besides the Conservative Peer, who spoke yesterday frankly and sincerely, another very Conservative gentleman who was my tutor, my Professor at Oxford, Sir Charles Oman, and it is from his history that I quote one short sentence which was one of the questions asked us in the Indian Civil Service Examination, for which I appeared and failed: "The Saracen alone it was impossible to convert." I do not claim to have in me orient blood like all the white people here and Dr. Moonje. I have the blood in me which my Lord Reading (who sent me to prison) perhaps has running in his veins. I am a Semite, and if he has not been converted from Zionism nor am I converted from Islam, and my anchor holds. I am the only person belonging to my party who has been selected by His Excellency the Viceroy, or the Government of His Majesty here, or whoever it is who



appoints these wonderful Delegates. Whose Delegates we are we do not know. I do not pretend to represent anybody, but I will say this much, and I feel certain that when you have heard me—I hope patiently—you will say that I am not misrepresenting myself, and I think that should be enough. In politics there is too much misrepresentation, even of oneself.

Yesterday, appeals were being made to me, because I am a fighting man, by the lady friends with whom I travelled, that I should answer Lord Peel. I said, "No, the answer must come from you still more conservative than Lord Peel" (Laughter). I will only quote to Lord Peel from an English poet, as I did when we were going through the lobby. I said, "I hope your Lordship is a Conservative and will remain a Conservative, because the only definition that I read of a Conservative was in Tennyson, who said, 'He is the best Conservative who lops the mouldered branch away'". I think those ideas which he expressed very sincerely and frankly really represent the mouldered branch which should be lopped away. This is my only answer to him.

As regards the other Conservatives, our own Princes from India, as regards His Highness the Maharaja Sahib of Rewa, I am not quite sure about his conservatism. If he takes Burke to be a Conservative, and quotes him at the end of his speech, I would say, "Be a Conservative and stick to it; small minds and large empires go ill together." If the British Empire—call it Empire, call it Commonwealth of Nations, whatever you choose to call it I do not care—if the British Empire desires to remain big, the small minds that have been visible and audible only too long must disappear (Applause). If you had followed Burke, you would not have lost America, and you would not be talking

of parity to-day. There will be talk of much more charity. And you would not have all those debts to pay. You would not have all that worry. You would not have to go to Geneva to the Preparatory Commission for the Disarmament Conference. How long that preparation is going to take, Heaven only knows. All these things come in, because you forgot your greatest politician, your greatest statesman, who was the man who in the House of Commons was called the "dinner bell", because when Burke got up to speak, you all left and went to the dining room.

You still do that to people who are like Burke, and I therefore say, and I quote him once again—"Men, not measures." I do not care what constitution you have, but if you have got one man in England who is a real man —"Oh God, for a man of heart and head like some of the simple great ones gone for ever and ever by!" autocrat democrat, aristocrat—I care not what you call him—one who can rule and dare not lie, I hope my old friend, Mr. MacDonald, will at least prove the man to rule, and that he would not dare to lie to his own party, to his own conscience, to his own dead wife and to his living country; and if you people of all parties assist him, we shall make history. But, even more than that, I trust my old friend Mr. Ramsay MacDonald. I, a republican, make this concession, that I place my trust in the man—I call him a man, because a man's a man for a that—who inaugurated this ceremony in the Gallery of the House of Lords whose name is George. Whether you call him His Majesty, or whatever you call him, he is a man, (Cheers.) He knows India better than any of his Ministers, past or present, and I am looking up to him to do justice to the 320 millions, who constitute one-fifth of the whole of humanity, and

I am strengthened in that belief by the wonderful patriotism shown by the Princes arrayed over there—the Conservative element of India. It must be a revelation to my Lord Peel and to my Lord Reading, it is no revelation to me. I am again a unique person. While I am a British subject, yet I was being excluded from the Indian Civil Service Examination, because they said I was not a natural-born British subject. Provisionally, they admitted me, and when the evidence from my mother came in they admitted me, but I happen also to be the subject of an Indian State, and probably in that respect I am a unique person. I was born in a State, I have served in a State, I have served in another State—my master is here; I ate his salt for seven years—and when I was dying two years ago, it was an Indian Prince who sent me at his own cost his own doctor here. When I was supposed to be going to die once more at Simla, it was a friend whom I was about to take as a private tutor, the Nawab Sahib of Bhopal, who exercised the truest hospitality, which the British are not yet exercising—he turned his guest-house into a hospital for me. The British will be extending their hospitality to me; if they make me a free patient in every hospital that there is (Laughter). When I was sent to Simla to the hospital, I made a judicious separation between two fiancées, a lady on one side and a military officer on the other, who were to be married very shortly. Both were ailing. The lady asked, when she saw an Indian coming into the quarters, "What is this old man ailing from?" The Doctor said, "Tell me what the old man is not suffering from"—a man with my dilated heart, with my blindness and what not? With my gangrene foot, with neuritis, with this huge bulking foot through oedema, with an albumen area and the whole long:

list that I could give you, if Colonel Gidney would not think I was becoming his rival as a medical man. I would not have travelled seven miles, let alone have come seven thousand miles on land and sea because, as the *Daily Herald* puts it, I am a convert from a rebel against the Government, I have become a traitor to my country and I am now working with the Government. I say I can work even with the devil, if it is to be work for the cause of God.

I hope you will forgive this long introduction about my health and ailments and all sorts of things, but the fact is that to-day the one purpose for which I come is this—that I want to go back to my country only if I can go back with the substance of freedom in my hand. Otherwise I will not go back to the slave country, I would prefer to die, in a foreign country; and so long as it is a free country you will have to give me a grave here.

I begin with the Conservatives by thanking them. When I met Mr. Baldwin at the dinner which the Government hospitality provided for us, when I was really very ill and ought to have been in bed, I was watching for the cherrywood pipe, and, thank God, it came out. So I went up to Mr. Baldwin and I said, "In two ways you have made history. Although a Conservative belonging to a party of the so-called idle rich, you have at least been human enough to establish this rule, that where only Coronas could be smoked, an honest man could bring out his shag, put it into a cherrywood pipe, as I used to do at Oxford, and smoke it." But he has done another historic thing. He has sent out a Conservative Viceroy of the type of Lord Irwin. If any man has saved the British Empire to-day, it is that tall, thin Christian. If Lord Irwin was not there to-day, Heaven only knows what would have happened. At least I would not be the com-

rade I am supposed to be. We should not have been at this Round Table. It is for the sake of peace, friendship and freedom that we have come here, and I hope we shall go back with that. If we do not, we go back into the ranks where we were before. You may call us traitors to the country. You may call us rebels or outlaws.

I have said something about His Excellency Lord Irwin, but I do not wish to associate myself with his government. The only good point about their despatch is that it has provided us with another historic document. The Simon Commission's Report is not the only document we have to consider. The despatch is a most disappointing document. The best thing we can do is to create our own documents here. The best hearts and the best brains of two big countries are assembled here. Many who ought to have been here are still in gaol in India. Mr. Jayakar, Sir Tej Saprú, and I tried our hands at peace-making with the Viceroy and Mr. Gandhi, but we failed. I hope we will not fail, when we go back to our country this time, to carry with us the substance of freedom.

Lord Peel said, "Oh yes, but when you go back to your country with a constitution such as you want, those people who are not co-operating will wrest it from your hands." Wrest it! When I can fight the British, I can fight the Indians too. But give me something to fight for. Do not let me have to take back from here a charter of slavery and then expect me to fight my own people. I could not do it, and if I tried to do it, I should fail. But with freedom in our hands, I would gladly go back to those in whose name my friend Mr. Jayakar spoke. He claimed to speak for Young India. I think he knows that, although a much older Indian, I am a young man in

heart, in speed, in temperament and in fighting. I was non-co-operating, when Mr. Jayakar was still practising in the Law Courts. Anyhow, he was not in gaol with me. My brother and I were the very first to be sent to gaol by Lord Reading. I bear no grudge, but I want the power, when Lord Reading does wrong, also to send him to gaol.

I have not come to ask for Dominion Status. I do not believe in the attainment of Dominion Status. The one thing to which I am committed is complete independence.

In Madras in 1927 we passed a resolution making that our goal. In 1928, in the Convention of our Parties, a report was moved, one of the very first clauses of which was about Dominion Status. Even my old Secretary, the President of the Congress to-day, was kept down by his father. There is a Persian proverb which says, "Do not be a younger brother." In the case of him, I would say "Be a cat, do not be the son of your father." I got up in his place, when he could not speak for complete independence, and I opposed the clause dealing with Dominion Status. In 1926, I would not make it my creed, because once we make it our creed in the Congress, we cannot admit anybody else into the Congress, who does not hold the creed. I would like to keep the door open for negotiation. I would not like to slam the door in the face of anybody.

His Excellency Lord Irwin, a Conservative Viceroy, was the man on the spot. When we came to London we heard that everybody was appealing to "The man in the street". Whether the man in the street is ever heard or not, I do not know, but Lord Rothermere and Lord Beaverbrook talk about the man in the street. In India, it is always "The man on the spot." The man on the spot came

here and he talked to the man in the street. They brought round Mr. Baldwin; they brought round the Conservatives; they brought round everybody, and made the announcement that Dominion Status was meant when in 1917 they said "Responsible Government". That cleared the fog which had been created in a very memorable meeting of the Indian Legislative Assembly in 1924 by the Officer-in-charge of the Home Department at the time, who I am glad, is present to day.

As I said two or three days ago, India has put on 50—league boots. We are making forced marches, which will astonish the world and we will not go back to India, unless a new Dominion is born.

If we go back to India without the birth of a new Dominion, we shall go back to a lost Dominion. We shall go back to an America. Then you will witness, not within the British Commonwealth or the British Empire, but outside it, with the Indian Princes, Dr. Moonje, with Mr. Jayakar, with myself and my brother, a free and United States of India. It will be something more than that. As I wrote shortly after leaving Oxford long years ago, in India we shall have something better than an America, because we shall not only have a United States, but we shall have united faiths. Not like to like, but like in difference; self-reverent each and reverencing each; distinct in individualities but like each other even as those who love.

It is with these passions surging in our hearts that we have come here. It now depends upon our Conservative friends, upon our Radical friends, upon our Labour friends and still more upon the one man whom I trust more in England than anybody else—His Majesty King George, the grandson of Victoria the Good, whose love for India nobody dare deny. Her whole life was the Magna Charta of

India, and in her grandson's time history will be written :— George III lost America. George V won India.

We are told that there are difficulties. It is said "Look at the States ". But I come from the States. Then there is the Army. It is the biggest indictment against Great Britain that the Army is not ours to-day, and if you ever use that excuse of the Army, you will condemn yourselves out of your own mouths. Let me tell you frankly and honestly, but in a friendly way, that your greatest sin was the emasculation of India. (Hear, hear).

I am glad to hear my friend say "Hear, hear". I was very sorry to hear him talk about our people being fired upon and running away. We have 320,000,000 of people. When they can afford to die in millions from famine and from plague, surely they can afford to die from British bullets too. That is the lesson which Gandhi wanted to teach us, and that is the lesson which we must learn now. In 1913 I was in this country when Gandhi was leading his movement in South Africa. Mr. G. K. Chesterton presided at a meeting in the Essex Hall, and he called upon me to speak. Other speakers had spoken of Gandhi's new philosophy. I said "Please understand one thing about that." Whether it is his philosophy or mine, it is the human philosophy. Nobody wins in a battle. There is merely the will to kill. In India we have not the power to kill, but the moment we develop the will to die, numbers will tell. 320,000,000 of people cannot be killed. There is no mechanization for which you can find money which can kill 320,000,000 people. Even if you have got that mechanization, even if you have got the material, you have not the morale to dare to kill 320,000,000 people. We must have in us the will to die for the birth of India as a free and united nation.



The real problem which is upsetting us all the time has been the third problem—the Hindu-Moslem problem. But that is no problem at all. The fact is that the Hindu-Moslem difficulty like the Army difficulty, is of your own creation. But not altogether.

It is the old question of divided rule. The moment we decide not to be divided you will not be able to rule. With this determination, we have come here. Let me assure every British man and woman who thinks of shaping our destinies that the only quarrel between the Hindu and the Moslem to-day is a quarrel that the Moslem is afraid of Hindu domination. I want to get rid of that fear.

The very fact that Hindus and Moslems are quarrelling to-day shows that they will not stand British domination for one single minute. That is the point to grasp. British domination is doomed over India. Is our friendship doomed also?

My brother took service under the Government, for 17 years, but he did one thing for me. He sent me to Oxford. He was always taunting me in my non-co-operation days by saying, "You have a soft heart for that place called Oxford". I must admit that I had. I spent four years there, and I always carry with me the most pleasant recollections of that time and I want to keep that feeling. But I can taunt my brother. When he was being tried at Karachi—when the Jury let us off, and there was a British juryman among them; they voted for our release because we were such sporting lot—he said, "Even if it becomes my duty to kill the first Englishman I come across, if he happens to have blue eyes my knife will not work, because I shall think of the eyes of Theodore Beck, my late Principal at my College."

Therefore, even if British domination is doomed—and it must be killed here—do not let us kill British friendship. We have a soft corner in our hearts for Great Britain.

One word as to the Mussulman position. Many people in England ask us why this question of Hindu and Mussulman comes into politics and what it has to do with these things. I reply, "It is a wrong conception of religion that you have; it is not dogma; it is not ritual; religion, to my mind, means the interpretation of life." I have a culture, a polity, a synthesis of life which is Islam. Where God commands, I am a Mussulman first, a Mussulman second and a Mussulman last, and nothing but a Mussulman. If you ask me to enter into your Empire or into your nationalism by leaving that synthesis, that polity, that culture, that ethic, I will not do it. My first duty is to my Maker, not to H. M. The King nor to my companion Dr. Moonje; my first duty is to my Maker, and that is the case with Dr. Moonje also. He must be a Hindu first and I must be Mussalman first, so far as that duty is concerned.

But where India is concerned, where India's freedom is concerned, where the welfare of India is concerned, I am an Indian first, an Indian second, an Indian last and nothing but an Indian.

I belong to two circles of equal size but which are not concentric. When we came to England in 1920 at the head of the Khilafat Delegation, my friends said, "You must have some sort of a badge." I decided to have a badge with two circles on it. In one circle was the word "India; in the other circle was Islam, with the word "Khilafat" and the word "India." "India" came in both circles. We are not nationalists; the Mussalmans say that God made Man and the Devil made the Nation. Nationalism

divides; no wars, no crusades, have been so cruel as last war, and that was a war of your nationalism.

But where our country is concerned, where the question of taxation is concerned, where our crops are concerned, where the weather is concerned, where all associations in those ordinary matters are concerned, which are for the welfare of India, how can I say "I am a Mussalman and he is a Hindu"? Make no mistake about the gulf between Hindu and Mussalman; they are founded only on the fear of domination. If there is one other sin with which I charge Great Britain, in addition to the charge of emasculating India, it is the making of wrong histories about India and teaching them to us in our schools, with the result that our schoolboys have learnt wrong Indian history. The quarrels which are sometimes visible in our streets on certain days, are quarrels which have been instilled into the hearts of our so-called intelligentsia—I call them unintelligentsia—by the wrong history taught to us in our schools for political purposes. If that feeling, which writes "Revanche" large over the politics of certain people in India exists, and if it existed to the extent which it does to-day, and the Mussalmans were everywhere in a minority of 25 per cent. and the Hindus were everywhere in a majority of 66 per cent. I could see no ray of hope to-day; but thanks to the jerry-mandering of our saints and our soldiers, if there are provinces like that of my friend Dr. Moonje, in which I am only 4 per cent. there are other provinces where I am 93 per cent. There is the old province of Sind, where the Mussalmans first landed, where they are 73 per cent., in the Punjab they are 56 per cent., and in Bengal 54 per cent. That gives us our safeguard.

I want you to realise that for the first time you are introducing a big revolution into India; for the first time

majority rule is to be introduced into India. The old rulers who gambled their kingdoms away do not have a majority rule; Akbar and Aurangzeb did not have majority rule; when Ranjit Singh ruled in the Punjab, he did not have majority rule; when Warren Hastings and Clive ruled India, they did not have majority rule; and even in the days of Lord Irwin, there is no majority rule.

For the first time in India, we are going to introduce majority rule, and I, belonging to a minority, accept that majority rule. Although I know very well that if 51 people say that 2 and 2 make 5, and 49 people say that 2 and 2 make 4, the fact that 51 say that 2 and 2 make 5 does not cause them to make five. Still, I am prepared to submit to majority rule. Luckily, however, there are Mussalman majorities in certain provinces, and with the federal form of Government, which is suited to India not only for Hindu-Moslem reasons but for the sake of the Princes, this is in our favour. The centrifugal and centripetal tendencies are so well balanced in India that we are bound to have a federal system of government there, not as a distant ideal, as the Government of India says, but to-day, now this minute. We shall leave this Conference only with federation established in India, with the treaties made with the Princes, with the consent of the Crown and the Princes.

I sometimes hear it said that nothing can be done without the consent of the Princes. No, Your Highnesses, we Your Lownesses will do nothing without your consent. But when, at the end of 1857, the powers of the East India Company were transferred to the Crown, nobody ever thought of asking your consent. There were not so much as "By your leave". Your relationship with the Crown was established merely *ipso facto*, but it was with a family

of Kings who are really people many of whom worship their conscience, and it is that which gives us hope.

One more word and I have done. I wish to say just this about the Army. I am giving away a secret in regard to the Army now. When, ten years ago, H.R.H. The Duke of Connaught was sent to open the Indian Legislatures, Mahatma Gandhi and myself were united by our late lamented dear friend C. R. Das—whom our eyes seek to-day at this table, and who would have brought Motilal Nehru and Mahatma Gandhi to this table, had he been alive to-day, for he was a man of imagination—were together and I was acting as Lord Chamberlain to Mahatma Gandhi. Any number of people were coming to see Mahatma Gandhi and to touch his feet. I wish he had had the feet of a centipede, but even then he could not have coped with the thousands who came to see him, and my life was misery. Amongst those people I saw 10 or 12 tall, turbaned men, not in uniform, but looking very much alike. I thought they were members of the C.I.D. My belief, after my arrest and internment in 1925, is that there is no place where God and the British C.I.D. do not exist, so that whatever I say and whatever I do, I do in the belief God the Almighty and the British spy are present. I went up to these supposed British spies, and I said "What can I do for you? I have been doing a lot for the C.I.D., and I should like to do something more". They said "We do not belong to the C.I.D.; we belong to the Army." "Then what", I asked, "are you doing in this seditious house?" They said "We have come to pay our respects to Mahatma Gandhi; we belong to the escort that has been brought from Poona for the Duke of Connaught". I said if they wanted to see Mahatma Gandhi, I would take them in straightaway. Mahatma Gandhi asked them whether

they were interested in Swaraj, and they said "yes." Out of respect for the British Indian Army, I will stand up and repeat their words. Gandhi said to them "Are you interested in Swaraj, you who belong to the Army and who have been brought as an escort all the way from Poona, because they cannot trust the people of Bengal, their first Presidency, for the safety of the Duke of Connaught?" They said "Only the other day our Colonel on parade told us laughingly something about Gandhi, saying "Do you know Bunnia Gandhi wants Swaraj for India?" and he laughed and said "Do you want Swaraj?" Of course he expected we should all say 'No, Sir'. But the Company very quietly said, 'Yes, we want Swaraj for India'. Then the Colonel asked them why they wanted Swaraj, and they told him that when they were sent to fight in Europe even when they saw Belgian soldiers coming back after a defeat those soldiers would reply to anyone who asked who they were "We are Belgians; we belong to the Belgian Army". Sometimes the French came running back, but if anybody asked them who they were, they drew themselves up and replied that they belonged to the French Army. It was the same with the British; but these men said that, even when they had won and had saved the coast in a critical moment in October, when anybody asked them who they were, they could not say they belonged to the Indian Army; they had to say "We are British subjects."

Now these men say that they want to stand upright and be able to say "We belong to the army of India." I tell you this is the fact, God's own truth, about the Indian Army. You take a plebiscite of Indian Army, God Almighty being present, and the British spies being also present, but some of us also being present, and you will find that we know more than anybody else on that subject.

The Government of India's Despatch goes further than Sir John Simon's report which says that the Army should not be under the control of England but under the Government of India. There are three members of the Government of India, the pigment of whose skin is the same as mine, sometimes even darker. Two of them were my stable companions in England as students, and the third also studied here. If these people can control the Army, why cannot Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru be Prime Minister of India? Why cannot Sir Muhammad Shafi be Prime Minister of India, or why cannot even a humble man like myself become Commander-in-Chief of India? I have exhausted your patience, but I can assure you my speech has been both exhausting and exhaustive. I take my seat and I hope I shall not be called upon to speak again until you announce, Mr. Chairman, that India is as free as England.

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## FIFTH DAY, NOV. 20.

### H. H. THE NAWAB OF BHOPAL

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Mr. Chairman : As several of my brother Princes have already spoken, I will crave your attention for only a few minutes. Time presses, and we are all anxious to get to work in Committee. That being the position, the thought that has been in my mind from the moment when His Majesty the King-Emperor opened the Conference with his gracious words is that here at last is the opportunity of getting rid for ever of the misunderstandings and the consequent cloud of suspicions that lie between our two nations. We meet in an atmosphere of good-will, an atmosphere which has been fostered throughout his Viceroyalty by Lord Irwin, one of the greatest of Viceroys, whom India honours as one of the best friends she has ever had, and who has rendered such signal service to his country and ours in striving to bring the two together. In that atmosphere, and with an earnest desire on all sides for free and frank discussion.

I have no doubt that we shall be able, under Providence, to settle the essentials which shall secure the future peace, happiness and prosperity of India as a contented member, equal in status with all the rest, of that community of free self-governing nations, which now constitute the British Empire, linked together by united loyalty to His Majesty's Throne and by a corporate ideal of mutual co-operation for the common good.

At the outset our discussions were set the high standard to which they ought to aspire by the extremely



able and thoughtful opening speech of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru—(hear, hear)—which has defined the goal towards which India is pressing, and has done so in a manner which, I believe, will be helpful to us all. Speaking for myself, and I am sure too on behalf of my brother Princes, I cordially reciprocate his view of the share which the Indian States can contribute in a united federal India, and I particularly endorse his remark that, when the time comes, they will furnish a stabilising factor in the constitution. (Hear, hear.) I note that both he and other speakers recognise that nothing in a system of federation connotes any interference with the internal affairs of the States; that their treaties with the Crown will remain unaltered, unless and until modified by mutual consent, and that it is in matters of common concern, hereafter to be defined by mutual agreement, and in nothing else, that federation will be concerned. On that understanding, only one feature has to be added to the picture, namely, that the federation shall be equal on both sides and that there can be no question of the status being in any way subordinate to that of the rest of India. On those conditions I entirely agree with the principle of federation. The details will have to be worked out by the committee already appointed for the purpose and must provide that all States, who agree to participate, even the smallest, shall be properly represented.

In this connection some remarks were made as to interaction between the States and the rest of India. "It is impossible", it was said, "to conceive of a free British India without conceiving of free Indian States." I fully subscribe to that remark, though not quite in the sense in which the speaker proceeded to develop it. A free Indian State means the disappearance of that doctrine of

paramountcy which has been imported, contrary to our treaties, into the relations between the States and the Paramount Power and which has been so much in vogue in comparatively recent times. That, Sir, is one of the facts to be kept steadily in mind. On the other side of the case, we Princes have no apprehension as to how the processes at work in the rest of India, where we must rely on democracy not being made a cloak for aggression, will affect our peoples, and we shall be content to leave it to our States to work out their own development.

In this connection, seeing that communal troubles have bulked so largely in the news from India, thus creating an impression that the country is the cockpit of warring sects and thus standing in the way of her aspirations, I wish to make it clear, as the point has not been brought out hitherto, that among the Princes no rift exists as between Muslims and Hindus—(applause)—and that in the Indian States communal tension has so rarely occurred that it can be said to be practically non-existent. (Renewed applause.) This fact brings me to a second point, namely, that there is nothing in our respective religions which should lead to such ill-will, and that the reason why it has arisen in British India has been solely political. The various minority movements have exactly the same basis, and equally the attitude of many of the politically minded in India towards Great Britain, which has demonstrated itself at times in ways, which are frankly to be deplored, is not, believe me, inspired by racial animosity, but is solely political. And as soon as the foundations of the Constitution for a self-governing India are well and truly laid these differences, we all believe, will automatically disappear. These are facts which I can state from personal knowledge and without risk of

contradiction, because we Indian Princes are not isolated in our States, but from our very position as Rulers are bound to keep in touch with the course of events and the trend of thought in other parts of India. We know fully as well as the people of India represented by the delegates here present, and possibly more clearly than the British authorities, the amazing growth of the national feeling throughout India.

The enormous importance of these facts is obvious. On the one hand they explain the statement made here on behalf of Young India, that if you give India Dominion Status to day, in the course of a few months the cry of independence will die of itself. On the other hand, I hope that they will go far to allay the doubts with which Lord Peel explained how Conservative opinion approaches the solution of the Indian problem.

Turning now for a moment to other matters, which concern the States and will come up for discussion during this Conference, the Chamber of Princes has already expressed itself strongly against the Report of the Indian States Committee and will never be satisfied until their contentions, which were so summarily brushed aside in that Report, receive the detailed investigation they deserve in a regularly conducted inquiry. Since that Report there is more *exparte* matter under the head of "Relations with States" in the recently published Dispatch of the Government of India, with which the Princes are just as strongly dissatisfied. These are matters for discussion in committee and elsewhere. But I am obliged to mention them here in order to place our protest on record at the earliest opportunity and to indicate how much will have to be done in framing the list of matters of common concern, which will hereafter be the sphere of the Federal Council, and in devising a

satisfactory impartial tribunal to adjudicate on all matters, which may be in dispute between the States and the rest of India, or in which the States may be at variance with the officers of the Crown, with whom they are to be brought into relation in place of the Government of India.

These, Sir, are matters of very great importance to the States as on them and on the satisfactory development of communications and the finances, the future social progress of the States will largely depend. But the matter of the most cardinal importance is the future constitution of India, which this Conference is here to discuss. The welfare of the States is inseparably bound up with that of the rest of India.

I beg, therefore, of the British representatives at the Conference, and those whom they represent, to bear in mind in approaching the problem, that we are an ancient people, compared with whom many of the most powerful countries of the present day are of very recent growth. The Aryans among us have a continuity, which stretches back beyond the dawn of history. Islam was a world power at the time of the Norman conquest. The Aryans had an Indian Empire before the Christian era; the Moghuls had one to which the countries of Europe sent embassies, and in the last century again has an Indian Empire been evolved under the British Crown. The first two were Eastern. Their influence survives in the world to this day in religion, philosophy, art and science. Now the British Empire has grafted the West on the East; and though, as Easterners we have our special modes of thought and our own ideals of life, we fully appreciate the great benefits which Great Britain has brought us. Peace and security and the highest standard of administration have been among her gifts, but the greatest of all is, that we-

have again become a united living nation under the Crown Standing where we do to day, full of vitality, knowing our resources and our intellects, can we be expected to stand still even for a time, and watch the rest of the world go on ? Should we not enter, as we desire, into the promised land, into that greater sphere, which the genius of the British race has evolved, that of being one of the body of self governing free dominions with equality of status united in the Empire of the British Crown ?

Here in the centre of the Empire, St Paul's stands as the central monument of the British race. A few years ago though outwardly as fair as ever, it was found to be in serious danger of collapse. All parts of the Empire at once rallied to the rescue, and now the building stands rejuvenated and strong enough to stand for all times. So, Sir, it is with India. I state, with all the earnestness I can command, that though she stands fair to the eye, the structure is full of fissures. But grout her with the cement of national unity, which is ready to hand, give her national freedom and that equality of status, for which her sons are longing, and she will stand throughout the ages as the noblest and strongest support of the British Empire.

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I propose to make a brief statement on behalf of the workers of India on the momentous problems before this Conference. The workers of India want full responsible self-government as much as the other classes. Although on account of ignorance and illiteracy they do not formulate their ideas and express their feelings in the same manner as the educated classes, those of us who are in close contact with them know how strong their feelings are and how easily they are aroused.

During my visits to this country I am often asked how the workers will fare in a self-governing India. My reply has been that I hope their conditions under self-government will improve, but that at least their position will not be worse than it is to-day. That is a cautious reply, but I think it is an entirely adequate one. No special justification is needed for the establishment of self-government in India; it is the retention of foreign domination which requires special justification.

While thinking over this subject, I have also asked myself what the British Government has done for the Indian workers and what it can do for them now. Though the British Government has much experience of the evils which generally follow in the wake of industrialisation, they were not able to avoid them in India when that country gradually developed industries. It is true that Factory Acts were passed from time to time, but the motives of the British Government, through whose pressure in the initial stages the legislation was passed, could easily be questioned; and as the Government of India was also greatly influenced by European industrialists in India, these measures were very inadequate and could not effectively

check the evils which were growing apace. Latterly also some legislation has been passed through the influence of the International Labour Conference and on account of the pressure of the recently started but rapidly growing Trade Union movement in the country. But even these efforts fall short of the needs of the time, on account of the fact that the Government of India and the Provincial Governments are now dominated by the joint influence of the Indian and European industrialists in India. To day the Secretary of State for India and the British Parliament have practically lost all their power of initiative in the matter, and the workers of India depend solely on the strength of their organisation and on whatever political influence they can bring to bear on the Indian legislatures.

What would have been the condition of Indian workers if British rule had never been established in India is a hypothetical question, but one can draw an inference from the fact that during the last ten years neither the Legislative Assembly nor any Provincial Council has refused to pass any labour legislation brought forward by the Government, and so it may be assumed that the position of Indian workers would not have been worse than it is to day.

I realise that even in a self governing India Heaven will not immediately descend to earth for the Indian workers, but their chances of success in their struggle will be greater than when they are under a Government which is really responsible neither to the British Parliament nor to the legislatures in India. The struggle will also be made somewhat easier, as the extraordinary influence which the European industrialists in India exercise to day will be greatly reduced.

But this is not all. My friend Mr Shiva Rao and myself have come to this Conference in the hope that, with

the help and sympathy of the other Delegates, the constitution of a self-governing India will be so framed that the political influence of the workers on their Government will be much greater than it is to-day. For this purpose we should like in the first place the constitution to contain a declaration of the fundamental rights of workers. It is true that such a declaration has not the force of legislation, but none the less it will serve a very useful moral purpose. Secondly, the constitution must be founded upon universal adult suffrage. Much is made of the practical difficulties; it is said the constituencies would be unwieldy, but this difficulty is not expected to disappear at any time, and the Indian masses will never agree to deprive themselves of their rights of citizenship for ever. Much is also made of the difficulties created by illiteracy, but those difficulties exist even to-day in the case of persons already enfranchised or whom it is proposed to enfranchise. The possession of property added to illiteracy does not remove the difficulties which may be due to illiteracy.

Thirdly, without entering on the question of a federal or unitary form of government, the workers of India insist that labour legislation shall always remain a central or federal subject, and that the central or federal Government shall always retain to itself the power of control and supervision in its enforcement. If labour legislation and its enforcement are left to Provincial Governments or to the constituent parts of the federation, labour legislation and its enforcement will be very difficult. If the constitution does not make proper provision for this it will be utterly useless to the workers. Moreover, labour legislation and its enforcement must remain central or federal subjects for the ratification and enforcement of International conventions on labour subjects.



Here I must draw the attention of the Conference to the fact that by Section X of Article 405 of the Treaty of Versailles, Part XIII, Labour, a federal State the power of which to ratify International Conventions is limited, escapes more easily from its international obligations on labour matters. The practical effect of this section of the Peace Treaty to the disadvantage of workers may be judged from the fact that while even a backward country like India under a unitary form of Government could ratify eleven conventions of the International Labour Conference, advanced countries like Australia and Canada under a federal form of government could ratify only four conventions each. I therefore hope that the power of the Indian Central Government whether Federal or Unitary to ratify international conventions and to secure their enforcement will not be in any way limited. This subject will no doubt be considered by the Royal Commission over which Mr. Whitley has been very ably presiding and although the Commission may not report before this Conference finishes its work, I have absolutely no doubt in my mind that the Commission will generally support the view that I have put forward.

I must here refer to the position of Indian States whose coming under the Indian Constitution will whole-heartedly be welcomed by Indian workers. I hope the Representatives of the Princes will agree to a constitution in which Labour Legislation as well as its enforcement for the whole of India and the ratification of international conventions and their enforcement will not have unnecessary difficulties due to the form of the Constitution. At present the Indian States have done nothing to recognise their International obligations in Labour matters which I hope they will not hereafter do. Lastly may I say that to day labour is not the

only matter which is internationally considered. The tendency to find an international solution to our difficulties is naturally and very properly growing and occupying a wide sphere and I hope that our Constitution will be so framed in this Conference that India as a whole will be able to take full benefit of the International action and India as a whole will also be able to be helpful in the international solution of the difficulties of the world. Whatever form of Government we decide to establish in this Conference let us at least do nothing to make future changes in that form practically impossible.

We cannot settle our constitution for all time. If it is found by experience that the form of government which we settle in this Conference is not suited to the needs of the future, it should be possible by constitutional means to secure such changes in the form of government as may be found necessary. If my suggestions regarding incorporation of the Declaration of the Fundamental Rights of Indian workers in the constitution and the establishment of universal adult franchise be accepted, as I hope they will be, and if the constitution is so framed that Central or Federal Government, with or without Indian States included in it, will retain in its hands full authority without any limitations regarding labour legislation and its enforcement and regarding the ratification and enforcement of international conventions and other obligations, the immediate establishment of full self-government in India will not only secure for the workers of India an improvement in their present position, but eventually will enable them to occupy the same position in their country as the workers of Great Britain are occupying in their own.

## BEGUM SHAH NAWAZ

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Mr Prime Minister My sister delegate's presence and mine in this historic gathering is an illustration indeed of the fact that the so called unchanging East is unchanging no longer Ten years ago who could have thought of Indian women coming to London and taking part in the deliberations of such a Conference? To day, not only a Hindu, but a Muslim woman, belonging to a family the women of which have always observed strict purdah, are actually sitting with their brethern around one table in order to evolve a suitable constitution for their country (Applause)

This important and historic gathering is unique of its kind for it is the first time that the Princes and people of India are sitting together, with the representatives of the three great parties in England, to discuss and frame the future constitution of India But is it also unique because for the first time women have been admitted to such a gathering? (Applause)

Sir, we are grateful to you, to the Secretary of State, and to his Excellency Lord Irwin that when issuing invitations to the representatives of all the parties you and they did not forget that half of the country on which depends the welfare of India's future generation

Sir, the history of my country is the history of nations who have tried, sometimes successfully, but more often unsuccessfully, to weld together a continent like India into one great Empire, one great nation Most of these nations came from countries near and distant, allured by the rich plains of Hindustan and by its fabulous wealth, beauty and culture Under some of them India not only enjoyed peace and tranquillity, but achieved a high culture

and civilisation, thus contributing more than its share to the progress of the world. To-day we are witnessing, not the birth, but the re-birth of a great ancient nation. Sir, very few people in this country realise the tremendous change in our country which has taken place during the last five years. Things have moved and are moving at such a tremendous pace that sometimes we ourselves are startled. In the remote corners of India, in the out of the way places, you will find people, especially young boys and girls, talking of their national aspirations and of the freedom and liberty of their Motherland. There is such an awakening in the youth of the country, both in the rural and urban areas, that it is not possible to check the growing desire, the increasing spirit, which animates them to form themselves into a nation worthy of the name. We, the women of that reviving nation, cannot but rejoice at this awakening. But, happy as we might feel, this brings with it the tremendous responsibility of guiding the younger generations. It is our duty as mothers, as sisters, as wives to show them the right track and lead them along the straight road.

Sir, the basis of human society is federal. A union of two forms, a home, a group of homes is known as a village, villages together become town, a number of towns form a district, and a federation of districts is called a province or a country. Modern civilisation, with all its culture and development of the human mind, has brought home to us the fact that for a big country like India, where different races and different interests exist, a Government established on the basic principle of federation alone can be a success.

By following this principle countries like the United States of America, the Australian and the Swiss Federa-

tions, have become some of the greatest nations of to-day. Units bind themselves together for the sake of their Motherland, and for the purposes of defence from foreign aggression, and thus gain that peace and tranquillity which is essential for the full development and progress of a nation. Having realised this, we, the women delegates from India, support the proposal of a federal form of government for our country. Such a form will give to our people in their respective Provinces, in their natural surroundings, and in their own traditional culture, freedom and scope for full development of the different faculties given to them by providence. Provincial genius in every sphere of life will better flower amidst its own native surroundings, and will thus spread its perfume all over the country and the world. A Tagore in Bengali and a Mohammad Iqbal in Urdu, by writing in their respective language could enrich the world with such gems of thought and literature.

We are glad, Sir, that our Princes have proved true sons of the soil of their Motherland, and are ready to join an All India Federation. The golden day for our country will be then when the Indian India and the British India will link themselves for common purposes, thus forming themselves into one great nation.

Mr. Chairman, on behalf of the womanhood of India, I make an earnest appeal to you to let us go back to our country with such a measure of reforms as, when placing them before our younger generations, we may be able to say to them, "In this age of scientific development, when no country can stand isolated, you have in the British Commonwealth of Nations a ready-made union. Now that an equal partnership with the sister Dominions is offered to you, what more do you require"?

Sir, having had many opportunities of meeting quite a number of British people of all shades of opinion, I find that one of their arguments against India getting full measure of reforms is: "How can India be given Dominion Status when it is so backward in social reform"? Such remarks have often been made by the Press, as well as by unsympathetic politicians in public. My reply to them is, "Yes, we have many of our social problems to tackle, but show me any country on the face of the earth where such problems do not exist in one form or another"? We have taken our problems in hand, and are trying to tackle them day by day; with the help of God we hope to achieve—and achieve very soon—that Western freedom of speech and action, combined with Eastern restraint, which is the ideal of our womanhood.

The social reform of a country depends mostly upon its women. With the best intention in the world, a foreign Government may introduce excellent measures of social reform, but because it is a foreign government, the reforms advocated by it are always looked upon with suspicion. As soon as we have the legislation of our country in our own hands, we can better do away with some of the social evils existing to-day, just as Japan, Turkey, Persia, Mysore, Baroda, Bhopal, and Travancore have been able to do.

Almost as soon as our men got the franchise, they did not hesitate in giving us our share; and now that the women of India are coming forward and taking an active part in the political life of the country, the solution of all these problems will not be difficult to find. With women to guide in the social matters, the men of a country can achieve greater success in social reform.

Mr. Chairman, whatever may be the ultimate form of government decided upon, we hope that this Conference

will not treat us in the way we have been treated in the Government of India Dispatch

The fate of half the population of the country has been decided in one sentence. Had that one sentence said that sex should be no disqualification for women in any way we would have rejoiced. But, to finish nearly 160 million of His Majesty's subjects by saying that no special provision should be made for women, shows a complete lack of understanding. But, if others have blundered, we hope and pray that this Conference will not, and it will give women their adequate share in the administration of their country.

Sir, with your permission, I earnestly appeal to the British Delegation as well as to my countrymen, to sit around this table in a spirit of mutual co-operation and good will. With only one aim and one object in view—that of finding a suitable constitution for India—a constitution which, while satisfying the legitimate aspirations of an ancient nation like India, by giving it full Dominion Status, with certain reservations, of course, for the transitional period, the fewer the better, should be the means of removing mistrust and suspicion and should establish an everlasting bond of friendship between England and India. (Applause.)

I appeal to you all let us not sit down in the spirit of the ruler and the ruled, but as friends, with sympathetic hearts, and open minds, to arrive at a conclusion which will help the suffering masses of the country that we love. India, bruised and aching, is looking up to us—rather not only India but the whole world is looking up to us—to spread the balm of goodwill and friendship—Let us not disappoint them. May Almighty God bless our efforts. (Prolonged applause)

## SIR MIRZA M. ISMAIL

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Mr. Chairman : I shall be as brief as possible. I only wish to say that in the opinion of those I am privileged to represent at this Conference, the time has come for making a radical change in the system of government in India. That is a change which seems equally necessary in the interest of both countries—not more necessary for India than it is for Great Britain, Great Britain which is only less dear to us than our own Motherland. To my mind, the success of this Conference will be judged mainly by this test : How far have we been able to bring England and India closer together in bonds of true friendship and unity ? India wants to remain within the Empire as an equal partner with the rest. She has no desire to sever her connection with Great Britain. As Mr. Jayakar said the other day, this cry of independence is only a cry of despair. I would attach no importance to it, save as an indication of the intense desire felt by the people generally for greater opportunities of self-expression and self-development.

There is, I believe, general agreement with the view, both in this Conference and outside, that the future government of India should be constructed on a federal basis. What exactly is meant by this term “federal” in its application to the peculiar conditions of India, will have to be discussed and determined in committee. That—I mean the constitution of the Central government—is the fundamental issue before this Conference.

By agreeing to join an all-India federation, the Ruling Princes have rendered incalculable service to their Mother-



land at this most critical juncture in her history. Their attitude has enormously facilitated the work of this Conference and has made the whole political problem of India more susceptible of satisfactory solution than it would have been otherwise. I am one of those who entertain no doubt whatever that the Princes will never have any reason to regret their decision, and that they and their States will, occupy a position, as honourable as it will be assured, in the future councils of their common motherland.

India is a land of many creeds and many communities and diverse interests, but I believe that it is this very diversity that will go far to ensure the requisite stability in the democratic institutions that are proposed to be established in her country.

Another matter upon which we—I mean the Indian sections of the Conference—are agreed is that a measure of responsibility should be introduced at the centre if the constitution is to work satisfactorily and is to enjoy an adequate measure of confidence and support from the people. Whatever may be the risks and the difficulties in taking such a step—and they are undoubtedly considerable—the British Government will, we all hope, come to the conclusion that a solution which does not satisfy the people at large is no solution at all. It can neither work smoothly nor endure for any length of time. A constitution which provides full autonomy in the Provinces, responsibility at the centre (subject to such transitional safeguards as may be necessary and unavoidable) and a close association between British India and the States in matters of common concern—this, let us hope, may be the result of our deliberations here, a result which, I venture to think, would satisfy all reasonable people in India.

In conclusion, I should like to assure my fellow delegates from British India that we of the Indian States wholeheartedly join with them in their appeal to the British nation to set India on the high road to self-government. I would, at the same time, venture to ask my countrymen to remember—I hope I shall not be misunderstood, for I think I speak nothing but the obvious truth—that great journey cannot be accomplished successfully, nor can those patriotic aspirations, ours as much as theirs, be fully realised except in company of their compatriots in the States, and, may I also add, with the goodwill and co-operation of Great Britain.

Mr Chairman The first temptation to which I felt I was likely to succumb was to controvert certain statements which have been made, and to allude in passing to certain misconceptions that were apparently present even to those who had large experience of Indian affairs On a very memorable occasion an English statesman urged his audience to consult a large map It is sometimes astonishing that on occasions of this kind the history of England and the history of India are apt to be forgotten Let me, in passing—not in a spirit of reproach—advert only to three matters My Lord Peel referred to *monopoly* Did he remember that in 1721 there was a prohibition of imports into England of any Indian printed calicoes Did he advert to the series of statutes beginning from the reign of Queen Elizabeth which prevented Indian goods reaching England? Did he remember what took place in 1874 when the representatives of a great trading federation remarked upon the calamity of new mills being erected in Bombay? But I shall not dwell on that aspect of the matter any further *Let us consult large maps Let us have advertence to the history of England and the history of India*

It is often said that the professional politician is *rife* in India, but let it be remembered that the object of the professional politician and of every other politician, is to seek what is beyond politics and what is beyond the transient needs of the hour—the prosperity and the contentment of the people In the few remarks which I shall permit myself I shall have reference only to that You had a great and magnificent gathering here at the Imperial Conference What was the object and outlook of that



'British Dominions have had their own experiences in this matter? Have they not profited by their experiences? Have not great countries like the United States had financial dis-equilibrium? Has that country not benefited by its experience? After all, in financial matters more than in any other the school of experience is the best school at which to learn, and we shall never learn unless we emerge from the position of being *in statu pupillari*.

When we came to this Conference we came in some doubt and hesitation, but it has been rightly remarked by the Lord Peel that the Government of India Despatch has already become out of date. The memorable attitude of the Indian Princes and the line they have taken has made that despatch absolutely out of date. The ideal of federation, not as a dim and distant ideal but as a matter of practical politics, which is adumbrated and envisaged by the Indian Princes in their assembled might and power has made the Government of India Despatch out of date. But more than that it must be said that the march of events will make all these despatches, memoranda and reports out of date, because India, let it be granted, has now joined together in the determination to solve its own problems through its own men, aided by the best brains, by the best talent and by the best goodwill on the part of Great Britain—but only aided.

There are two more points with which I desire to deal. Something was said about H.E. The Viceroy's speech and declaration not making any promise of immediate translation of self-government into practice. Let us not hear of that in this Conference, I beseech you. The only thing to be decided at this Conference is, Is it possible to go back to India and make for a contented India? There was an idea thrown out to

the effect "Well, let this Conference arrive at a result: what will happen? You will go back to India and you will probably find that irresponsible men will wrest all the power out of your hands, and that will be to the disadvantage of India and England alike." Make that impossible. And you will make it impossible only if this Conference achieves something real and substantial. The only way in which to take it out of the power of the irresponsibles to ruin things is to make it possible for the irresponsible to become responsible. You will undoubtedly make the irresponsible responsible if you make something which is worth striving for, dying for, yearning and longing for as the result of this Conference. I firmly believe that opinion in this Conference will be unanimous that the only way of producing peace and goodwill and contentment and comradeship between India and England is to hammer out a system of government which will enable the most restless spirits of India to feel that they have brought into being a constitution worth working in. If that is done this Conference will have achieved a great result. If we have to go back to our country and say that we have brought back only a halting or fragmentary system of government not worth working for or yearning for, we shall have failed. Then will arise the calamity to which allusion was made. Then will arise the calamity of the irresponsible coming to positions of power and influence. On the other hand, if with the co-operation of the Indian Princes and British Indians, if with the co-operation of British statesmen and Indian statesmen, we achieve real self-government, we shall make it impossible for those who have not the best ideals of both countries before their mind's eye to do what they may otherwise do.

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## LORD READING

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This is indeed a memorable Conference. I have been more and more impressed as I have listened to every speech that has fallen from those who have addressed us. It is memorable in the first place because it marks a stage in the development of the constitutional advance of India. Hitherto the process has never been adopted of a Round Table Conference to discuss the propositions before the Government; but very often—it may be too often, as I have sometimes thought—in the past decisions of the Government were formulated and invitations then issued to attend a Conference to change them if possible. Obviously India was anxious to change that system, and for my part I am glad that this has happened; I think it gives India a fairer chance when she can put her case before the Government has come to conclusions, instead of having to argue against something already determined and in which, no doubt, every consideration has been taken into account before the decision was reached.

For that reason, I think we are all pleased when the proposal was made that this Round Table Conference should take place, but I do not think we quite appreciated how important it would be; indeed, I am sure even those who set out from India for this country to take part in this historic Conference did not realise then the events that have happened since we have been here. If I may be permitted to do so, I should like to say first, perhaps out of a gallantry we all like to display in the presence of ladies, that this Conference is

marked first by the presence of Indian ladies. That is a distinct advance by the East. I should like to remark that as I study the affairs of the East from day to day, I am every day more and more astonished at the rapidity, the almost dazzling swiftness with which the East seems to outdistance the West. Here is a movement which has almost only just started in India. In my time it was only beginning, and yet here at this moment we have the ladies present and taking part in our debates.

Now let me turn to what, to my mind, is a distinct historical advance in the history of India, which once it has begun can never stop, once it has left its imprint, as it has, can never be effaced, which is going to take India further, perhaps, than some of us ever thought when we have had visions before us of what India might achieve. We have now our minds enlarged, our area of vision extended, our horizon infinitely widened, because we have the Princes taking part with us and with British India.

The Government of India, as you are aware, has always had these two separate limbs, so to speak, of the government. On the one hand it has to deal with the Princes of India; on the other, it deals with British India. Think of the improvement as they have themselves portrayed it in various speeches to-day! Think of all that is open to us if now we proceed together to form a government for all India, a United States of India, as it has been termed, which will in truth be the greatest conception of federation, should it take place, that the world has yet seen. It is unique in its character and quite remarkable in its extent. There is no sub-continent, no nation and certainly no country that I can think of in the world that can present to you, to us, to the



world, the picture as we see it and as it is now portrayed before us. Never can this be paralleled. Here you have the rulers of great Indian States—the representatives of His Exalted Highness the Nizam of the great and powerful State of Hyderabad—the representatives of Mysore, again a State which has always, if I may be permitted to say so, taken the lead in the advance towards more constitutional government of Baroda, which certainly has not lingered behind and of many others—I should like to go right through them, but time does not permit—the very picture they have brought before us shows us the rulers coming here and taking part with the representatives of British India because like them they feel the call of the Mother country and they put before you their desire to join in all that may be for the good of India.

Now let me turn to the main subject that we have to discuss but before doing so I should like to say how deeply impressed I am by the speeches that we have heard during the whole course of the discussion and also by the conversations that I have been enabled to have outside this room with those who are representing the various parts of India.

In approaching the subject of India, I speak here to day on behalf of the Liberal section of Parliament, but I speak also on behalf of myself, and you will permit me to say on my own behalf that I have a profound interest in Indian affairs. I can never forget all that happened in India, I shall always recall it and always have an abiding affection for India and the memories it has left me.

I have told you, Sir, that I speak for the Liberals. We are here discussing two main questions, as I understand it. The first is the one propounded by you, Sir, as

to whether the future constitution should be on a federal or a unitary basis. The other is incidental to it and arises from it, for you have Mr. Prime Minister, set us a good example by allowing the fullest latitude of debate, so that there shall be no technicalities introduced into this great discussion. We have therefore been able to speak of everything.

What stands out most is, of course, the demand for advance in constitutional government. Let me first deal with that one aspect of it. Dominion status is a vague term. I am not going back on all that has happened in the past; we want to deal with the questions as they now stand. Dominion status I gather to mean a status equal to that of the other Dominions within the Empire. That is the true meaning of it. It has never been defined; no lawyer has ever attempted to put it into definition, but I do not suppose anyone will doubt that that is what in truth is meant by it. Keep that meaning of it clear in your minds, because if you do I think you must see that there are very many questions to be considered and discussed before you can get quite to the ultimate goal which you naturally strive to attain. Let me add this, so that I may clear the ground and not take up further time in discussion. Speaking on behalf of those with whom I am associated, let me say we most fully accept the statement that the natural issue of the Declaration of 1917 is that of Dominion status, and that the implication of the words used is Dominion status. We do not wish to discuss for a moment fine shades of difference; they may have had their place, and I take full responsibility for having at one time thought that they had their place, that responsibility properly falls on me and not on others. We have had questions raised and answers

given which have cleared the ground, and we are now dealing with the subject as it stands before us.

I would ask you to bear this in mind. Let me say that though I speak for the Liberal section and have no right to speak for any other, I hope that when any one of us belonging to any one of the three sections of Parliament speaks in connection with India, we shall always speak as one Parliament and not as members of different sections of Parliament. I hope that in the end we may be able to continue that unity in Parliament which we have sought so hard to maintain. But, speaking once more for our own section, let me say that we Liberals, who inherit the great traditions of liberty and self government which have distinguished this country, and who try in our humble way to carry on in the avenues that have been marked out for us, have no desire in the slightest degree—and not only no desire but no intention—to deviate from the promises made. In that at least I am quite sure I speak not only for my own section but for Parliament. Whatever has been promised stands. There may be differences of opinion between us, there may be differences of opinion between you from India and we from Britain, as to the pace at which we should advance; but there can be no difference of opinion with regard to the goal we seek to reach, and indeed we shall do everything we possibly can to help in reaching that goal.

But I would just remind you that, after all, the object of this Conference is to arrive at proposals which will be submitted to Parliament by His Majesty's Government, and it is hoped with at any rate some considerable assent. That is the purpose for which we are here and the ultimate conclusion which will be reached after all our discussions.

I have no desire or intention to take up time in discussing the difficulties which must arise.

But, Sir, we must speak with sincerity, we must speak with frankness, as all have recognised. You will forgive me if I use a strong expression, but it is only expressing what I have heard in different directions from many of you, when I say that it is idle to say that at this moment there could be anything like equality of status—that is constitution status—in India with the Dominions. It is idle at this moment because there are other questions that come, in which must be discussed, and, indeed, no one could more freely have recognised this than Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, who introduced the subject. Begin, for example, with the Army.—I am not going to suggest how it should be dealt with—then there are foreign affairs and a number of other questions, but in the end, whatever the proposal is, it will have to be decided by Parliament; it is Parliament that must consider, and Parliament that has to be persuaded.

Will you let me remind you that there is already a variety of literature available. There is the Simon Commission; it is true, we know the history of it, it does not commend itself to you, but let me remind you again that it contains a mass of most valuable material, and, speaking for myself, I have the greatest admiration for the work that Sir John Simon has done, and for those who were associated with him in it. Those of you who are, for reasons not to be entered into at the moment, too ready to throw aside the report of the Simon Commission, may perhaps be more minded to study that of the Government of India. One of the striking things is that in the Report of the Government of India as we have got it now the Viceroy and the Members of Council, both British

and Indian, giving their views, you will find that there is not much difference between that and the conclusions arrived at, in the main, by the Statutory Commission.

But I want to pass from that and get on to what I conceive to be the subject we are considering to day that is, whether are not this Government is to be on a Federal system. I have one observation with regard to both these Reports. The Statutory Commission lays great stress upon federation, tries all it can to direct our attention to federation, and make it the ultimate goal. The Government of India takes the same view, only regarding it as more distant. Since then, as has been said by more than one speaker, a great change has taken place because of the Princes and I will deal just now with their position very briefly. I am dealing merely with this particular consideration because that is the subject of the debate we have before us. The Princes have explained their position, I cannot, of course, go into the various considerations put forward. They do not all agree in detail, that was not to be expected, but we shall, I hope, arrive at conclusions when we sit around the table and try to settle the great question. But what I do feel—and I have it well in mind—is the pertinence of the poetic exhortation, if I may be permitted to say so, which his Highness the Maharaja of Alwar addressed to us at this Table, and the invocation which followed from it. And I would try and rise with him and all of you to the pinnacles and not lose my way in the woods, where I might not find the straight and clear path. I would keep straight on, looking ahead, striving to banish distrust, to create trust and in that way we may work together with one understanding, with one purpose, to do the best we can in the interests of India, and that this federation of All India

this great and mighty conception, may be reached with the assistance of the Princes and of yourselves. In the end we may look back to the days of this Conference and realise that this Conference has done one great thing, that it has accomplished this principle of federalism, and I hope—but, of course, that is entirely for you—that we may be able by a unanimous conclusion to arrive at the result that we should not proceed to consider the federal system, that that should be our work, quite understanding, of course, that no one is bound to detail, that we are dealing only with the principle. But if we do accomplish that, then this Conference will have succeeded to a great extent at the start, and will have changed, as I understand it, the whole aspect of the situation as it existed before the Conference met. (Applause).

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## H. H. THE MAHARAJA OF NAWANAGAR

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Mr. Prime Minister: Before I begin to address this Conference, may I add a word of congratulation to the gracious lady who addressed us this morning. Speaking on behalf of all of us, whether the British Delegation, the Princes, or the other Delegates from India, we congratulate her most heartily on the most wonderful speech that I have heard from the lips of an Indian woman on so momentous an occasion.

Mr. Prime Minister, you have unfortunately, on this last day, curtailed our time of speaking, and therefore, although I had hoped to address you from notes, yet, lest I should wander and take up too much of your time, I will confine myself to reading what I have to say.

Much has already been said, at this table, on the supreme gravity of the issues that agitate India to day; I can hardly add, with any words of mine, to the volume of testimony that is forthcoming from speaker after speaker who brings to this country very recent and intimate knowledge of the national movement that has long since stepped beyond the proverbial lawyer, and has entered the hearts and homes of all classes of people and in all parts of the country. It is a mass movement that has got in its grip, the mind of India—not the literate classes only—as it is often alleged in this country. Let that stern fact be clearly recognised and properly appreciated.

I will refer in the first place to a few of the admirable speeches, as for example those of Sir Tej Bahadur

Sapru and Sir Muhammad Shafi. I naturally refrain from referring to the utterances of the members of my own Order, because they embodied my own personal views. Those that I do refer to, were so frank and explicit that, in my humble opinion, the Conference should be grateful to the speakers for putting the issues on both sides with such clarity. Our congratulations are due to all of them, particularly to Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru for his masterly review of the position in British India to-day about which, he is eminently qualified to speak. We, the Ruling Princes, Sir, represent the conservative element in the Indian polity, and yet we cannot afford to ignore the fact that times are changing rapidly and that the doctrine of "Festina Lente" is not suitable to the pace of progress which the changing conditions imperatively demand. We have the example of England before us to follow. England preserves even in her wonderful progress a sober conservative outlook and yet takes rapid strides, without losing grip of the essentials of stability.

I must not allow this opportunity to pass without a reference to the striking speech delivered by His Highness the Maharaja of Kashmere, on the opening day of the Conference. In a few well chosen sentences, His Highness laid before you the ideals which animate us and the expectations which prompted us to attend this Conference.

We have always stood for the steady progress of our country. We have the staunchest possible faith in the destiny of India as a whole,—it cannot be otherwise. We have inherited its traditions, its culture, its instincts, its honour. Our ancestors shaped its history at one period or another. We have rejoiced when it prospered, we have suffered when it suffered. On many occasions our blood has been shed in her defence. And though in the altered



conditions of to day we may sometimes be judged harshly even by our own countrymen, we have always held nearest to our heart her prestige and her honour

Sir, it may interest, particularly the British delegates, to know that the word "Subject" had no place in our vocabulary. In our language our subjects are known as our "Praja" which is a Sanskrit word meaning "Children". In that concept there is no tinge of subordination which is implied in the Latin root of the word 'subject'. A prince and his people—members of a united household—living together as father and children is a concept that is very dear to the Oriental mind and it underlay Oriental polity. I am not talking just now of the comparative merits of democracy and monarchy. I am only alluding to the culture of India and of the polity to which it gave rise. As His Highness the Maharaja of Bikaner said, traditions of centuries of Kingship are ingrained in our being. But we at once recognise the obligations of Rulership—the obligations which are immense and proportioned to the sanctity of the united family ideal. Such being the Indian tradition the solution we are seeking of this problem with which we are confronted must be found in consonance with that tradition.

My purpose therefore is to bring home to this gathering the vital necessity of satisfying the aspirations of India as a whole, if she is to continue as a contented and vigorous member of the British Commonwealth of Nations. I have no hesitation in saying that her association with Great Britain is not merely a historic event it is an event of great import. It is Providential. It cannot be other wise for we find two countries, separated geographically and culturally, though not racially, brought together in the closest contact and the most intimate association. And I

say advisedly racially, Sir, because Mr. Baldwin was good enough in a memorable speech he uttered about a year ago, and which created a profound and happy feeling in India, to refer to Indians and Englishmen as coming from the great Aryan stock. As Lord Peel very rightly said, we in India have always appreciated the great work that Britain has done. Britain has done well by India in a variety of ways. She has developed her resources and modernised many of her institutions, above all she has established peace and tranquillity. All this is acknowledged and gratefully appreciated.

Three boons in particular stand to the eternal credit of Great Britain. I will give the first place to the Pax Britannica, which has enabled India to make much material progress. She has given India a unifying medium through the English language, the noble literature of which has helped to introduce a new spirit of liberty and self-respect. Thirdly India's connection with England has proved to the world that the two countries are complementary to each other, and to-day the world stands to benefit by the mutual "give and take" of the two countries of which they are eminently capable.

Speaking for myself, I have been educated in this country and have spent many years of my life here. England is almost as much my cultural and spiritual home as India; its great institutions and its political life have been to me, a perennial source of refreshment. From her I have imbibed much that is ennobling and elevating. Mr. President, my hopes centre in the perpetuation of the British connection, which in my belief is a guarantee of the advancement of my country and of her future greatness.

Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru has asked us to federate with British India, we are prepared to federate so long as our internal autonomy is preserved and our present hardships are remedied. We the Ruling Princes are jealous of interference by others in our methods of Government. We therefore feel bound to refrain from making any suggestions about the exclusively domestic problems of British India. Subject to such mutual freedom in internal affairs, let us say that for all questions of common concern, we regard federation with British India as being both possible and desirable at the earliest date. As I see the position, British India in federation will continue to manage its own affairs—its great provinces adjusting their relations between themselves. So also the States,—possibly assisted by a States Council—will continue to manage their own affairs. But for all matters of common concern there must be a Federal Council, composed of authorised representatives, from British India and the States. I see no reason why a federation should not be effected as soon as the difficult matters which fall to be adjusted can be settled, and I feel sure that only by federation can those aspirations for the dignity and status of India which we all of us entertain, in due time be achieved,—namely the equality of status with the sister dominions within the Empire. I must reiterate that no federation has ever come into being, in which the federal units did not know that their rights were. Therefore while asking for federation, we also ask for the “judicial” ascertainment of the rights of the States. The present position that the Paramount Power can at will over ride the treaties is extremely unsatisfactory. It is so utterly inconsistent with the Royal Proclamation in which the world was told that the treaties with the States are

inviolable and inviolable after they had been similarly pronounced to be sacred and sacrosanct. But for the existence of the States there would have been no use of the words 'Paramount Power.'

I am making no secret about the feeling of uncertainty and insecurity in which the States have been plunged by the enunciation of a doctrine which empowers the Government of India to override all treaties, engagements and sanads, on the plea of Paramountcy. I would plead, with all the emphasis at my command, that this uncertainty should cease and that all vagueness attaching to the conception of Paramountcy should give place to a clear formula which should be the outcome of a considered decision given by a competent and impartial tribunal.

The Butler Report, the Simon Report, the Government of India despatch have all failed to satisfy the parties concerned.

A contented India is, it is superfluous to say, an economic necessity. It is our keen desire to see that trade between England and India develops in volume and importance. A large number of my subjects and those of my neighbour, His Highness the Maharao of Kutch, reside in Bombay and carry on business in cloth. I know as a positive fact that their annual turnover goes over 2 to 3 million sterling or 30 crores of rupees. It is not a small stake that these merchants of ours possess in the Bombay market. But both I and the Maharao of Kutch are helpless at the present moment. The policy of boycott, which may I tell you, is gaining in strength as time goes by, and hits them very hard, and it would be useless on our part to induce them to resume their trade relations with British merchants in the present circumstances because it would be futile. An early settlement, therefore, of the Indian problem is of

the utmost importance. If Manchester is prosperous again, a great deal of unemployment in the North would disappear.

So far as all those present at this Conference desire to remain within the British Empire as equal partners, in so far as we all are sincerely firm in our devotion to the King Emperor, what is the obstacle in the way of conceding India's demand? At any rate what is to prevent a declaration of policy by His Majesty's Government at this late date? Such a declaration, with the association of several parliamentary parties, will greatly facilitate the work of the Committees to be appointed. One thing is certain—if those who have come to this Conference go back to India without the Parliament of Britain making it clear that the minimum constitutional demands of India will be conceded, not only will this Conference have been held in vain, but I am much afraid that such a fiasco would strengthen beyond measure the extremist party in India. I therefore submit, in the interests of both countries, with all the emphasis at my command that the recognition of India's status within the Empire and her right to be mistress of her own affairs as early as reasonably possible should not be left in any doubt. (Applause.)

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## SIR P. C. MITTER

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I have been honoured by the Landlords representing the different Provinces and their important interests to be their spokesman on this historic occasion. I have been charged with this duty by, amongst others, men like Nawab Sir Ahmad Said Khan of Chitiri from the United Provinces, the Maharaja Darbhanga of Bihar and Orissa, and the Raja of Parlakimedi, Madras. They, in their turn have varied experience and wide interest. I also represent the landlords of my own Province of Bengal, large and small, and that wider circle including the landlords who desire self-government for India for an integral part of the British Empire.

The discussions to which we have hitherto listened, have, I think, made it abundantly clear that on the British Indian side, both amongst the Muslims, and amongst the Hindus, there is a passionate desire for responsibility in the centre. When leaders of experience, position and moderation like Sir Muhammad Shafi on the Muslim side, and like my esteemed friend Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru on the other have asked for responsibility in the centre, when Their Highnesses the Indian Princes have shown such sympathy with British Indian aspirations, one can easily draw the conclusion that the desire for such responsibility is almost universal. The landlords, Sir, are as keen as any other section of their countrymen on the question of self-government, but being in a minority they naturally desire a constitution which will ensure the protection of

their interests along with those of the other minorities. They also desire that their class should have separate and adequate representation both in the Provinces and in the centre. They would further point out that in order to make responsible government a success there must be justice to all classes and interests, including theirs. They feel, like others, the urgent need for the establishment of harmony and peace in the country; indeed, they feel it more than the dwellers in urban areas. They realise that progress must depend on the maintenance of social equilibrium, and that the stable elements should have their place in the new constitution. They feel that no political arrangement in India has a chance of success which is not firmly rooted in the structure of Indian society.

The landlords, Sir, are naturally more intimately concerned with the rural areas, and with the interests and problems of such areas, and we know that more than 226 millions out of the 247 millions in British India live in rural areas. Self government in India will not be worthy of the name unless adequate and suitable—mark the word suitable—representation be given to rural areas and to the classes intimately concerned with those interests. Adequate provision should therefore be made for the representation of rural areas with a view to improving their present educational and economic conditions. (Hear, hear.)

Now, Sir, we are repeatedly told that self-government in India is really a graft and not a growth. Is that so? In the urban areas, with 50 years of experience in municipal politics and in council elections, with the keen desire of the educated classes who follow Western systems, is self-government not yet a growth in urban areas? But if you turn to the rural areas, if you approach the question of self-

government in rural areas as an Indian problem, I venture to submit that you will look upon it in true perspective and see that it is really a growth.

When dynasties tumbled, when Empires faded, when legions thundered by, the village communities of India had their own self-government, and self-government under those conditions is much more difficult than self-government in the static state of society which you have in England or in many of the Western countries. But, mind you, in the future self-government of India do not forget the kind of self-government to which our rural areas are accustomed. In course of time, in the course of another 50 or 70 years, given the chance, the rural areas will appreciate the ballot box and will be able to use the ballot box as efficiently as the urban areas.

There is another point which, speaking on behalf of rural interests and also on behalf of the landlords who are intimately concerned with rural interests, I desire to make and that is the inadequate provision which has hitherto been made for social services in rural areas. The landlord cannot collect his rents unless his tenants are prosperous. In this connection I will refer to the Simon Commission's Report, and draw my conclusion from what is therein described. The average income of a native of these Isles is £100 a year. The average income of the Indian, according to the most optimistic estimate accepted by the Simon Commission, is Rs. 107 a year. According to a less optimistic estimate it is only Rs. 80. The British Indian Delegation are familiar with the unemployment problem. Comparing an annual income of £100 a year granted in these Isles, what is £6 or £8 a year in the case of a native of India, in spite of the advantages of a tropical climate? And this figure represents the average income



including the income of rich and poor, and including the income of the urban areas. With your knowledge of the acuteness of the unemployment problem in your country, you can appreciate what human existence is on an income of £6 or £8 a year.

But what is the good of stating all this unless you British and we Indians join our hands in uplifting 250,000,000 of our fellow beings? The three political parties of this country can really give us a helping hand. In the limited time at my disposal I will not go into details, but if the British Delegation will give me a chance I venture to say that I shall be able to place before them a scheme by which your unemployment problem will be rapidly reduced and by which the problem of India—namely, the uplift of the rural masses—will be solved in a comparatively quick time.

Before I conclude I would like to refer to two important speeches—one by Lord Peel and the other by Lord Reading. I could follow the speech of Lord Peel; I could see the difficulties he pointed out; but, with the utmost respect, and perhaps he was carried away by his usual eloquence, I could not understand whether Lord Reading really wanted to give us self-government immediately. But I could see Lord Peel's attitude. His attitude was "Yes, we may be prepared to meet you if you can remove certain difficulties; for instance, if you can set up a constitution which will ensure a stable state of society." There was one very important point raised by Lord Peel. He said that if we representatives of India, and the Princes of India, go back having attained our object there is a very strong party in India which will wrest power from our hands. Let me assure Lord Peel that if the sentiments of the people be satisfied there will be a large section of extremists who



## DR. AMBEDKAR

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Mr. Chairman. My purpose in rising to address the Conference is principally to place before it the point of view of the Depressed Classes, whom I and my colleague Rao Bahadur Shrinivasan have the honour to represent regarding the question of constitutional reform. It is a point of view of 43,000,000 people, or one-fifth of the total population of British India. The Depressed Classes form a group by themselves which is distinct and separate from the Mahomedans, and although they are included among the Hindus they in no sense form an integral part of that community. Not only have they a separate existence but they have also assigned to them a status which is invidiously distinct from the status occupied by any other community in India. There are communities in India which occupy a lower and a subordinate position. But the position assigned to the Depressed Classes is totally different. It is one which is mid way between that of the serf and the slave and which may, for convenience, be called servile—with this difference, that the serf and the slave were permitted to have physical contact, but from which the Depressed Classes are debarred. What is worse is that this enforced servility and bar to human intercourse due to their untouchability involves not merely the possibility of discrimination in public life but actually works out as a positive denial of all equality of opportunity and the denial of those most elementary of civic rights on which all human existence depends. I am sure that the point of view of a community as large as the population of England or of France

and so heavily handicapped in the struggle for existence cannot but have some bearing on the right sort of solution of the political problem, and I am anxious that the Conference should be placed in possession of that point of view at the very start.

That point of view I will try to put as briefly as I can. It is this : that the bureaucratic form of government in India should be replaced by a government which will be a government of the people by the people and for the people.

This statement of the view of the Depressed Classes I am sure will be received with some surprise in certain quarters. The tie that bound the Depressed Classes to the British has been of a unique character. The Depressed Classes welcomed the British as their deliverers from age long tyranny and oppression by the orthodox Hindus. They fought their battles against the Hindus, the Mussulmans and the Sikhs, and won for them this great Empire of India. The British on their side assumed the role of trustees for the Depressed Classes. In view of such an intimate relationship between the parties, this change in the attitude of the Depressed Classes towards British rule in India is undoubtedly a most momentous phenomenon but the reasons for this change of attitude are not far to seek. We have not taken this decision simply because we wish to throw in our lot with the majority. Indeed as you know there is not much love lost between the majority and the particular minority I represent. Ours is an independent decision. We have judged of the existing administration solely in the light of our own circumstances and we have found it wanting in some of the most essential elements of a good government. When we compare our present position with the one which it was our lot to bear in Indian society of the pre-British

days we find that instead of marching on we are only making time. Before the British we were in the loathsome condition due to our untouchability. Has the British Government done anything to remove it? Before the British we could not draw water from the village well. Has the British Government secured us the right to the well? Before the British we could not enter the temple. Can we enter now? Before the British we were denied entry into the police Force. Does the British Government admit us in the Force? Before the British we were not allowed to serve in the Military. Is that career now open to us? To none of these questions we can give an affirmative answer. That the British who have held so large a sway over us for such a long time have done some good we cheerfully acknowledge. But there is certainly no fundamental change in our position. Indeed so far as we are concerned the British Government has accepted the social arrangements as it found them, and has preserved them faithfully in the manner of the Chinese tailor who, when given an old coat as a pattern, produced with pride an exact replica, rents, patches and all. Our wrongs have remained as open sores and they have not been righted although 150 years of British rule have rolled away.

We do not accuse the British of indifference or want of sympathy, but what we do find is they are quite incompetent to tackle our problem. If the case was one of indifference only it would have been a matter of small moment, and it would not have made such a profound change in our attitude.

What we have come to realise on a deeper analysis of the situation is that it is not merely a case of indifference but it is a case of sheer incompetence to undertake

the task.' The Depressed Classes find that the British Government in India suffers from two very serious limitations. There is first of all an internal limitation which arises from the character, motives and interests of those who are in power which prevents them from sympathising with the living forces operating in Indian society, is inimical to its aspirations, is apathetic to education and does not favour swadeshi; it is not because it cannot favour these things but because it is against its character, motives and interests to do so. The second consideration that limits its authority is the possibility of external resistance. The Government of India does realise the necessity of removing the social evils which are eating into the vitals of Indian society and which have blighted the lives of the down-trodden classes; the Government of India does realise that the landlords are squeezing the masses dry, and the capitalists are not giving the labourers a living wage and decent conditions of work. Yet it is a most painful thing that it has not dared to touch any of these evils. Why? Is it because it has no legal powers to remove them? No. The reason why it does not intervene is because it is afraid that its intervention to amend the existing code of social and economic life will give rise to resistance. Of what good is such a government to anybody? Under a government paralysed between two such limitations much that goes to make life good must remain held up. We must have a government in which the men in power will give their undivided allegiance to the best interest of the country. We must have a government in which men in power knowing where obedience will end and resistance will begin will not be afraid to amend the social and economic code of life which the dictates of justice and expediency so urgently call for. This role the British Government will never be able to play.

It is only a government which is of the people, for the people and by the people that will make this possible.

These are some of the questions raised by the Depressed Classes and the answers which these questions seem to carry. This is the conclusion which the Depressed Classes have come to: namely that the Bureaucratic Government of India with the best of motives will remain powerless to effect any change so far as our particular grievances are concerned. We feel that no body can remove our grievances as well as we can and we cannot remove them unless we get political power in our own hands. No share of this political power can evidently come to us so long as the British Government remains as it is. It is only in a Swaraj constitution that we stand any chance of getting the political power into our own hands without which we cannot bring salvation to our people.

There is one thing, Sir, to which I wish to draw your particular attention. It is this. I have not used the expression Dominion status in placing before you the point of view of the Depressed Classes. I have avoided using it not because I do not understand its implications nor does the omission mean that the Depressed Classes object to India's attaining Dominion status. My chief ground for not using it is that it does not convey the full content of what the Depressed Classes stand for. The Depressed Classes while they stand for Dominion status with safeguards wish to lay all the emphasis they can on one question and one question alone. And that question is, how will Dominion India function? Where will the centre of political power lie? Who will have it? Will the Depressed Classes be heirs to it? These are the questions that form their chief concern. The Depressed Classes feel that they will get no shred of the

political power unless the political machinery for the new constitution is of a special make. In the construction of that machine certain hard facts of Indian Social life must not be lost sight of. It must be recognised that Indian Society is a gradation of castes forming an ascending scale of reverence and a descending scale of contempt—a system which gives no scope for the growth of that sentiment of equality and fraternity so essential for a democratic form of Government. It must also be recognised that while the intelligentsia is a very necessary and a very important part of Indian society it is drawn from its upper strata and although it speaks in the name of the country and leads the political movement it has not shed the narrow particularism of the class from which it is drawn. In other words what the Depressed Classes wish to urge is that the political mechanism must take account of and must have a definite relation to the psychology of the society for which it is devised. Otherwise you are likely to produce a constitution which however symmetrical will be truncated one and a total misfit to the society for which it is designed.

There is one point with which I should like to deal before I close this matter. We are often reminded that the problem of the Depressed Classes is a social problem and that its solution lies elsewhere than in politics. We take strong exception to this view. We hold that the problem of the Depressed Classes will never be solved unless they get political power in their own hands. If this is true, and I do not think that the contrary can be maintained, then the problem of the Depressed Classes is, I submit, eminently a political problem and must be treated as such. We know that political power is passing from the British into the hands of those who wield such tremendous economic, social and religious sway over our exist-



ence. We are willing that it may happen though the idea of Swaraj recalls to the mind of many of us the tyrannies, oppressions and injustices practised upon us in the past and the fear of their recurrence under Swaraj. We are prepared to take the inevitable risk of the situation in the hope that we shall be installed in adequate proportion as the political sovereigns of the country along with our fellow countrymen. But we will consent to that on one condition and that is that the settlement of our problem is not left to time. I am afraid the Depressed Classes have waited too long for time to work its miracle. At every successive step taken by the British Government to widen the scope of representative Government the Depressed Classes have been systematically left out. No thought has been given to their claim for political power. I protest with all the emphasis I can that we will not stand this any longer. The settlement of our problem must be a part of the general political settlement and must not be left over to the sifting sands of the sympathy and goodwill of the rulers of the future. The reasons why the Depressed Classes insist upon it are obvious. Every one of us knows that the man in possession is more powerful than the man who is out of possession. Every one of us also knows that those in possession of power seldom abdicate in favour of those who are out of it. We cannot therefore hope for the effectuation of the settlement of our social problem if we allow power to slip into the hands of those who stand to lose by settlement unless we are to have another revolution to dethrone those whom we have helped to capture power. We prefer being despised for too anxious apprehensions, than ruined by too confident a security, and I think it would be just and proper for us to insist that the best guarantee for the settlement of social problem is the adjust-

ment of the political machine itself, and not the will of those who are contriving to be left in unfettered control of that machine.

What adjustments the Depressed Classes want, I will place before the Conference at the proper time. All I will say at the present moment is that although we want responsible government we do not want a government that will only mean a change of masters. Let the Legislature be fully and really representative if your executive is going to be fully responsible.

I am sorry Mr. President, I had to speak in such plain words. But I saw no help. The Depressed Classes have had no friend. The Government has all along used them only as an excuse for its continued existence. The Hindus claim them only to deny them or better still to appropriate their rights. The Mahomedans refuse to recognize their separate existence because they fear that these privileges may be curtailed by the admission of a rival disowned by one section and unowned by another. We are left in a most intolerable position to which I am sure there is no parallel and to which I was bound to call attention.

Regarding the other question which is set down for discussion I am sorry it was decided to tag it on to a general debate. Its importance deserved a session for itself. No justice can be done to it in a passing reference. The subject is one in which the Depressed Classes are deeply concerned and they regard it as a very vital question. As a member of a minority we look to the Central Government to act as a powerful curb on the provincial majority to save the minorities from the misrule of the majority. As an Indian interested in the growth of Indian nationalism I must make it plain that I am a strong believer in the unitary form of government and the thought

of disturbing it, I must confess, does not please me very much. This unitary government has been the most potent influence in the building up of the Indian nation. That process of unification which has been the result of a unified system of government has not been completed and I should be loath to withdraw this most powerful stimulus in the formative period and before it has worked out its end. However the question in the form in which it is placed is only an academic question and I shall be prepared to consider a federal form if it can be shown that in it local autonomy is not inconsistent with central unity.

Sir, all that I as a representative of the Depressed Classes need say on their behalf I have said. May I crave your indulgence to permit me as an Indian to say a word or two generally on the situation which we have to meet. So much has been said regarding its gravity that I shall not venture to add a word more to it although I am no silent spectator of the movement. What I am anxious about is to feel whether we are proceeding on right lines in evolving our solution.

What that solution should be it rests entirely upon the view that British delegates choose to take. Addressing myself to them I will say, whether you will meet the situation by conciliation or by applying the iron heel must be a matter for your judgement. For the responsibility is entirely yours. To such of you as are partial to the use of force and believe that a regime of *Lettres de cachet* and the *Bastille* will ease the situation let me recall the memorable words of the greatest teacher of political philosophy, Edmund Burke. This is what he said to the British nation when it was faced with the problem of dealing with the American Colonies :—

“The use of force alone is but temporary. It may endure for a moment, but it does not remove the necessity of subduing again: a nation is not governed which is perpetually to be conquered. The next objection to force is its uncertainty. Terror is not always the effect of force, and an armament is not a victory. If you do not succeed, you are without resource; for conciliation failing force remains, but force failing, no further hope of reconciliation is left. Power and Authority are sometimes bought by kindness, but they can never be begged as arms by an impoverished and defeated violence. A further objection to force is, that you impair the object by your very endeavours to preserve it. The thing you fought for (to wit the loyalty of the people) is not the thing you recover, but depreciated, sunk, wasted and consumed in the contest.”

The worth and efficacy of this advice you all know. You did not listen to it and you lost the great continent of America. You followed it to the lasting good of yourself and the rest of the dominions that are with you.

To such of you as are willing to adopt a policy of conciliation I should like to say one thing. There seems to be prevalent an impression that the delegates are called here to argue for and against a case for Dominion status and that the grant of Dominion status will be dependent upon on which side is the victory in this battle of wits. With due deference to all who are sharpening their wits I submit, that there can be no greater mistake than to make the formula of logic govern so live an issue. I have no quarrel with logic and logicians. But I warn them against the disaster that is bound to follow if they are not careful in the selection of the premises they choose to adopt for their deductions. It is all a matter of temper whether you

will abide by the fall of your logic or whether you will refute it as Dr. Johnson did the paradoxes of Berkeley by trampling them under his foot. I am afraid it is not sufficiently realised that in the present temper of the country no constitution will be workable which is not acceptable to the majority of the people. The time when you were to choose and India was to accept is gone never to return. Let the consent of the people and not the accident of logic be the touchstone of your new constitution if you desire that it should be worked.

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## MR. K. T. PAUL

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Mr. Pannirselvam and myself have the honour to represent here a community which numbers five million people. Among the minorities, ours is the next to the Moslems in number. It is a steadily growing community. It has special advantages of education and training which render it far more useful to the country than its numbers would indicate. A big proportion of the elementary education of the country is manned by its men and women; its extended participation in the secondary and collegiate education of the country bring it into valuable contact with the young manhood and womanhood of the whole country. In the voluntary national service of medical relief for women the pioneering and the steady progress of the service has been possible because of the personnel so readily available from our community.

As for our rank and file, we are tillers of the soil, many more of us being labourers than owners of land.

In all such ways we are the servants of our motherland. Though our religion has come from outside—and we derive from it our deepest and most powerful direction for our private and public life and relationships—it should be realised that we have been in India for 1,700 years; that is, for over 700 years before the first Moslem arrivals in India.

That section of our community which is still the wealthiest and the most vigorous has been in the Hindu kingdoms of Travancore and Cochin from the third century

of the Christian era. The next great section was established in the Tamil kingdoms of the South-East in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. In all these centuries, though it will not be right to say that there were no difficulties, in the main it is a fact that we have had freedom and protection under Hindu and Moslem Prince alike. Nor do we feel isolated in point of culture and tradition. We drink from the same founts of literature, art, and music, and in fact the most modern tendencies of even our religious thought and expression is to relate them in all loyalty to its great history and traditions, to the categories that are derived from what is characteristically Indian lore. And with the deliberate advantages that we have of understanding the best in the mind and spirit of Britain, our community in general and its youth in particular, are now in the mid-currents of the nationalistic movement which is surging in the country. This was voiced in no uncertain terms in the resolutions of the All-India Christian Council which met in Lucknow on the 11th of July. I shall quote one section of the second resolution :

It is our observation that India has in the last three months indicated in the clearest way and in substantial unanimity that her place in the British Commonwealth should be that of a Dominion and that immediately. India has indicated this in the most arduous of ways, the way of suffering and self-sacrifice.

The same Council went on to state its views on the Round Table Conference in these terms :

Our All-India Conference which met in Lahore last December welcomed the proposal of a Round Table Conference. We still believe that the solution to the constitutional problems of India can be found only at a Conference at which the chief interests are adequately and acceptably represented. We do have the faith that H. E. Lord Irwin will recommend for participation in that Conference persons who are competent to express the views of the various important political parties and who are thoroughly acceptable to them. While we do welcome the Conference we wish to make certain points :

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I will quote only the first of these :

The mind of India as regards the main issue has already been indicated through the way of suffering. This should, therefore, be laid down as the limiting scope of the Round Table Conference within which and around which all other problems great and small should be worked out. Now that the Viceroy has signified that he cannot give any pledge, the Round Table Conference itself should lay this down as the definition of its scope—should lay down Dominion constitution as the main basis on which all other problems of internal and external relationships and responsibilities, as, e.g., of the Army, be worked out.

I shall be asked what precisely is the attitude of my community as regards the protection of minorities. I am here to say that this was considered with the greatest care by the All-India Christian Council, which laid down its views which we shall place before the relevant committees or sub-committees of this Conference. At this time I may be permitted to read only one section of it :

We are confident that our own community, especially the rising generation, is well aware of the fact that the place of a minority in a nation is its value to the whole nation and not merely unto itself. That value depends upon the quality of its life, the standard of its preparation for life's various activities, the strenuousness with which it throws itself into all avenues of useful services and the genuineness with which it seeks a common weal. We are well aware that in the peculiar social situation in India, even with all the values we have indicated, there are and will continue to be unmerited hardships falling on individuals and groups. But we record our conviction that while many of such hardships and disabilities will be met by such administrative devices as Public Service Commissions and by reservation in the Legislatures and Councils, the real solution is to be found in the positive and constructive methods of the community straining every nerve to make itself qualified, efficient, useful, and even indispensable to the nation.

The attitude of our community is thus one of trust. We do not ignore the fact of the minorities problem. Situated as we are between two great and powerful communities, we are only too often conscious of the fact that we are just forgotten, sometimes to our serious and lasting injury. But we have every belief that



this conference will find no difficulty in laying down general standards of equitable treatment to all citizens without prejudice or favour. In the first place we anticipate that in the new constitution of India there will be implemented articles setting forth such standards as were done in the new constitutions which arose at the Treaty of Versailles. In the second place we anticipate that the Central Government will be made strong enough to oversee the effective maintenance of such standards in actual practice throughout the country in all the Provinces and States. In the third place, and as my final word, I wish to make one point.

Our religious life brings us in intimate relations with the life of many Nations of the West, and our community is in a peculiar position to appreciate the enormous importance of our country maintaining international relationships in as many lines as possible. We will fail in our duty if we do not here and now emphasise what indeed is no new idea to our national leaders, that our Motherland has everything to gain by every tie she makes with other nations, East and West. We would mention this specially at this time because it has a bearing on the structure of our constitution. We are aware and proud of the fact that India, even as a so called 'subject nation' is becoming more and more an influence, through her literature and philosophy, and what I may call her spirit, upon the life and thought and spirit of many nations in both hemispheres. And today, when the stigma of political subjection is to be removed from her fair brow, we are anxious that no mistake should be made to weaken her integrity as a united indivisible entity which has always stood for something distinctive in the world. In our eagerness to safeguard the autonomy of the units which

shall make up the Indian Federation, we have also to safeguard with the greatest jealousy her integrity as a solid well-knit unit with a strong Central Government which could speak to other nations on behalf of the whole of India, and where necessary even make undertakings on behalf of the whole of India in matters of economic, humanitarian, cultural and peace interests. We crave for our India a real place, not merely in the British Commonwealth, but also in the sisterhood of all nations, a place that is real and effective for the good of the entire world.

## MR. M. A. JINNAH

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Mr. President: To use your own words I can assure you that we are here going to co-operate, animated by a determination to succeed.

The first point that I should like to deal with is the point with regard to the moral claims of Great Britain on the one side and the sins of commission and omission by Great Britain on the other. I tell you, Sir, this, that I am one of those who believes that no useful purpose will be served by going into that question. Let that question, may I say to those who indulge in it on both sides, be decided by the historians (Hear, hear). For my purpose it is enough that Great Britain is in India. I have no hesitation in conceding this proposition,—that you have a great interest in India both commercial and political, and therefore you are a party, if I may say so, gravely interested in the future constitution of India. But what I have said that I want you equally to concede frankly—and frankness does not mean wounding anybody's feelings, nor that we are influenced by bitterness; it means, as I understand, particularly in a Conference like this, that we should put our point of view frankly and respectfully and without wounding anybody's feelings, and therefore I shall avoid any kind of bitterness. When I have said this I want you equally to concede that we have a greater and far more vital interest than you have, because you have the financial or commercial interest and the political interest but to us it is all in all (Hear, hear).

Now, in that spirit, you sitting on that side of the Conference and we sitting on this side, let us approach

answer you want? Now let me tell you the tremendous fallacy of that argument.

Seventy millions of Mussalmans—all, barring a few individuals here and there—have kept aloof from the non-co-operation movement. Thirty-five or forty millions of Depressed Classes have set their face against the non-co-operation movement. Sikhs and Christians have not joined it, and let me tell you that even amongst that party which you characterise as a larger party—and I admit that it is an important party—it has not got the support of the bulk of Hindus. ("Hear, hear") Do you want every one of the parties who have still maintained that their proper place is to go to this Conference, and across the table to negotiate and come to a settlement which will satisfy the aspirations of India, to go back and join the rest? Is that what you want? Because what other position will they occupy? What will be the answer? I want you to consider the gravity of it, a gravity which was emphasised by previous speakers. You may, of course, argue it, but let us understand now the character and the function of this Conference. Speaking on behalf of the British Indian Delegation I do not want to indulge in generalities, but I want to put before you the cardinal principle by which we shall be guided in the further proceedings of this Conference. I must admit that while I am stating this cardinal principle we must have regard to facts and to realities, and that is why we are here to hammer out those facts and those realities and to hammer out a constitution for India which will satisfy the people. That cardinal principle which shall be the guide as far as we are concerned is this—that if I call it Dominion status I know that Lord Reading will put a poser as to what is the meaning of Dominion status; I know if I use the word res-

possible government somebody else will put me a poser, "What do you mean by responsible government?" I know if I use the expression, full self-Government, somebody else will ask me a similar question—but I say the cardinal principle which will guide us throughout the deliberations of this Conference is that India wants to be mistress in her own house; and I cannot conceive of any constitution that you may frame which will not transfer responsibility to the central government or to a cabinet responsible to it. If that is the cardinal principle by which we shall be guided then as Lord Reading very rightly pointed out, there may be questions, such as in defence or in policy and so on. I do not think there is any secret on that point so far as the British Indian Delegations are concerned. Whoever has used the phrase Dominion status so far as this table is concerned has always said "with safe guards during the transitional period". Sir, that is going to be our cardinal principle.

To sum up the substance of the speeches of Lord Peel and Lord Reeding, the only point that emerged was the difference with regard to the pace. I will only say one thing before I proceed a little further, and it is this—that self-government is not an abstract thing, it is a business proposition, and if the power of the Government is transferred to a Cabinet responsible to the legislature, the first and foremost thing that we have to provide is that the various interests are safeguarded, and you cannot possibly frame any constitution unless you have provided the safe guards for the interests which exist in India. First, there is the minority question, which we shall have to tackle, and unless you create that sense of security among the minorities, no constitution that you may frame will be possibly able to work successfully, ("Hear, hear."). Very

rightly, the Indian Princes are here, and you cannot very well frame a constitution for India, for self-government in the sense in which I have described it, without taking into consideration their position; and all that the Princes are anxious about is that they want certain safeguards in that constitution.

The next point, Sir, that I want to make is this. It was said by Lord Peel that there was the journey and the journey's end, as he read from the speech of Lord Irwin. May I point out to him that in that very speech this is what Lord Irwin said, which Lord Peel omitted :

Although it is true that in our external relations with other parts of the Empire India exhibits already several of the attributes of self-governing Dominions, it is also true that Indian political opinion is not at present disposed to attach full value to these attributes of status, for the reason that their practical exercise is for the most part subject to the control or concurrence of His Majesty's Government. The demand for Dominion status that is now made on behalf of India is based upon the general claim to be free from the control more especially in those spheres that are regarded as of predominantly domestic interest; and here, as is generally recognised, there are real difficulties internal to India and peculiar to her circumstances and to world conditions that have to be faced, and in regard to which there may be sharp variation of opinion both in India and in Great Britain. The existence of these difficulties cannot be seriously disputed, and the whole object of the Conference now proposed is to afford the opportunity to His Majesty's Government of examining, in free consultation with Indian leaders, how they may best, most rapidly and most surely be surmounted.

One more word I will say with regard to the pace. You, Sir, speaking two years ago at a meeting, said this, presiding at the British Labour Conference in London in 1928 :

I hope that within a period of months, rather than years, there will be a new Dominion added to the Commonwealth of our nations, a Dominion of another race, a Dominion that will find self-respect as an equal within the Commonwealth—I refer to India. (Applause.)

And yet, Sir, the crux of the two speeches of Lord Peel and of Lord Reading is that our differences are still with regard to the pace. Since 1928 two years have passed.

There is one more thing that I want to say. It is this. I think we have lost sight of the communication which has created us. From that announcement I will only read the passage :

The Chairman of the Commission has pointed out, in correspondence with the Prime Minister which I understand is being published in England, that as their investigation has proceeded he and his colleagues have been greatly impressed, in considering the directions which the future constitutional development of India is likely to take, with the importance of bearing in mind the relations which may at some future time develop between British India and the Indian States. In their judgment it is essential that the methods by which this future relationship between these two constituent parts of Greater India can be adjusted should be fully examined. He has further expressed the opinion that if the Commission's report and the proposals subsequently to be framed by the Government take this wider range, it will appear necessary for the Government to revise the scheme of procedure as at present proposed.

Therefore, Sir, when Lord Peel says that some of the recommendations of the Simon Commission are revolutionary, the Chairman of that Commission himself suggests that in the light of the inclusion of the Indian Princes you have not only radically changed the procedure, but the whole aspect of the position is changed altogether.

Sir, let me tell you this in conclusion—that so far as we are concerned the Simon Commission's Report is dead. The Government of India Despatch is already a back number, and there has arisen a new star in our midst to-day, and that is the Indian Princes. Their position has even placed the demand of British India for Dominion status in the background, and we are now thinking of a Dominion of All India. ("Hear, hear.") Therefore it is no

use your believing still in the Report of the Simon Commission or in the Despatch of the Government of India.

I must say in conclusion that I am very much moved by, and that I welcome warmly, the noble attitude, the patriotic attitude, that the Indian Princes have shown.

There is only one other word I would like to say, because there might be some misapprehension. It was said by H. H. The Maharaja of Patiala and also by H. H. The Jam Sahib that "before we consider the question of All India Federation we must have our status determined and decided by a judicial tribunal". I could not quite appreciate the force of that statement, but may I say to my friends the State's Delegates that whatever may be their position with regard to the orders that the Government of India may have passed under the present constitution, that constitution, is now in the melting pot, and they do not want anyone else to decide their status and rights. They are here to assert their status and rights. Whatever decisions this Conference may come to, and if there is an agreement, and if Parliament gives effect to it, it does not matter what has been laid down in the Butler Report or what has been laid down in the Secretariat of Simla or Delhi.

One more word about Parliament. It was said and emphasised by Lord Peel and by Lord Reading that Parliament must decide this question. We know that. We would not have been here if we did not expect Parliament finally to decide it. But remember, the original idea was that His Majesty's Government, in conference with the leaders of British India and of the Indian States, were to obtain the largest measure of agreement; and that if any such agreement were arrived at they would put these



proposals before Parliament. I am very glad—although I was opposed to the idea of the British Delegation being included, (I tell you that frankly), because as a business man I thought it was better to negotiate with one than to negotiate with three. It is more difficult to get three to agree. Therefore I was opposed to it. Now you are here. Do you not represent Parliament—the three Parties? You do, and if you come to an agreement are you afraid that Parliament will repudiate it? May I read here what Lord Irwin said about it when this question was raised :

It would seem evident, however, that what all people most desire is a solution reached by mutual agreement between Great Britain and India, and that in the present circumstances friendly collaboration between Great Britain and India is a requisite and indispensable condition in order to obtain it. On the one side it is unprofitable to deny the right of Parliament to form its free and deliberate judgment on the problem, as it would be short sighted of Parliament to underrate the importance of trying to reach a solution which might carry the willing assent of political India.

In this case now, as the Conference is constituted, it is not only with the willing assent of India but of the British Delegation. It would be a very bold Parliament indeed that would repudiate any agreement that might be arrived at this Table.

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## SIR ABDUL QAIYUM

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Mr. Chairman: Let me first of all thank the Prime Minister for having given me this early opportunity of speaking to the Conference. I do not know whether it was my extraordinary turban or my moustaches which attracted attention, or whether I was called upon because of a sense of justice that the depressed of the South who had spoken should be followed by the depressed of the North. Whether the one or the other, I must feel thankful to the Prime Minister. I was not one of those fortunate people whose names were sent up earlier, and I did not know whether I should ever get an opportunity of speaking to this House. I was ignored by all the different sections when they proposed the names of their speakers. When a man of the position of the Prime Minister excuses himself for his awkward account, I must excuse myself for my bad English and my bad pronunciation, as my English education has been very limited and I have not come into contact with English speaking people very much.

Sir, it is not a speech that I am going to make to this Conference. As I cannot make good speeches and impress my points on people by the force of good language and oratory it is an appeal that I am going to make to the Conference—to you, Sir as the head of the Government, to the British Delegates as representing the various parties in Parliament, and to my brothers from India with their Princes.

It is an appeal from one who has devoted the whole of his life to the service of the Empire—("Hear, hear")—

whose services have been appreciated in various ways both by Government and by the public. It is not the word of an agitator or a discontented man, it is the word of a man who has been brought up under the present regime, one who owes a good many obligations both to the Government and to the Empire. My appeal is on behalf of the people of the North West Frontier Province, a people who have rendered meritorious service to the Empire, who are the gate-keepers in one sense of the Indian Empire, who have served that Empire and have proved their loyalty to the Empire and to the country in numerous ways, who have fought against their neighbours (who happen to be their kinsmen in blood), who have rendered conspicuous services in the recent world war. If you take the percentage of recruitment of Indian Army you will find that the North West Frontier Province stands first throughout India. It is on behalf of that Province, that unfortunate Province, that I am going to make this appeal to the Conference. I do not think it is necessary for me to appeal to my brother Delegates from India, because they know the situation. They are more thoroughly acquainted with our sentiments and our services, and as I see during the sessions of this Conference that they are condemning untouchability and doing away with the depressed classes and are giving them full liberty throughout India, I find it unnecessary to appeal to them. I hope they will grant us equal rights. It is to you, Sir, who appear now inclined to be creating untouchability in the twentieth century, casting away a people, or rather stamping a people as depressed, as inferior, as not equal to the ordinary citizens' rights in India, to whom my appeal is addressed just now.

I hope, Sir, that my appeal will not fall on deaf ears. It is a great feeling that prompts me to speak in such terms.

as this, but my predecessors have been frank and sincere in their expressions, and I hope that I shall not be accused of undue bluntness if I speak on this occasion.

The question before the Conference is, how to meet the aspirations of India with respect to her constitutional advancement. Well, I do not think that I am competent, to speak on that question, because so far I am out of any constitution for India. As I have said, I do not shirk the responsibilities of this assembly, and so I hope that the rule of ten minutes will not apply to me either.

I understand that the trend of opinion is towards a Federation system. To my limited intelligence that is the only way in which India can make progress and be united. But my personal difficulty is, How am I to be fitted in in that Federation? Am I to have equal rights with the rest of India as a unit of British India or of the whole of India, or am I to be kept in the background and ruled in the present despotic way or by, to use a word which has been already uttered, domination. That is my point. I hope I am not going to be treated in any way as an inferior unit in the Federation. I claim equal rights, and I assure the Conference that nothing short of equal rights will satisfy me. That desire has been demonstrated in many ways. We have been clamouring for it during the last ten years ever since our separation from the Punjab, and I am not going to remain contented with this stigma of inferiority. When I see that *I am in no way inferior to the rest of India* in intelligence, in education, in physical culture or in other ways, I look upon it as a great hardship and as a great injustice when I am told "You are not going to have equal rights." A thousand and one excuses are found by various organizations and people proving my inferiority, but so far not a single one has convinced me. When other

people are claiming Dominion Status with their caste systems, with their Depressed Classes, with their untouchability, and with a thousand other difficulties in their way, am I not justified in claiming only a simple equal citizen's right for myself? I have no untouchability in my Province. I have no caste system in my Province. I am a very homogeneous community. Others are clamouring for protection, for safeguards for minorities and other things. I have not got the difficulty of minorities. I am prepared to satisfy my minorities. I am not so selfish as to refuse them safeguards. I am not so selfish as not to satisfy them. I am prepared to give them every assurance, and if necessary safeguards, which will satisfy them. I do not base my claim on communalism or on matters of policy.

These are not the bases of my claim. My claim is simply based on human rights—on rights of equal citizenship, and nothing more. I will not go into the details of my fitness for equal partnership, because I may possibly find an opportunity to examine people, or to offer myself for examination, in the Committees, but if I am as unfortunate as I have been only this morning, if I had not attracted your attention somehow or another, I may not even have the opportunity of going before a Committee and explaining my views. However, the time limit is near and I cannot go into the details of my case.

As I have said, I feel myself quite fitted intellectually, economically, physically and in every way. There may yet be some matter of policy. As an old servant of the Crown and of the Indian Empire I have been associated with trans-border difficulties the whole of my life. I have served you on Border Commissions, on the Frontier, on Royal Commissions and in various other ways. With all

this experience behind me, I cannot see any insurmountable difficulty in the way of my progress. I was separated from the Punjab where, for 50 years I was in the exercise of full fledged rights of citizenship. Nobody said a word about my unfitness. As a matter of fact I was fitter in my part of the Punjab than many other parts of the Punjab were. That can be proved by reference to books.

Then the evil day came when we were separated. It was our destiny, it was the hand of God. We deplored that day. We were told that as a small unit directly connected with the centre and under the very eye of the Viceroy we should advance by leaps and bounds. Well, we jumped at the suggestion, but what do we find? We are going backward while other people are going forward. We have lost three chances and now the last chance is going to be lost to us. If you put us one step backwards to day we are doomed for ever, we shall never be able to pass two classes in one year and get into the higher class.

You may talk about the difficulties. I will not disclose what I have learned about the difficulties in an official capacity, but I am prepared to discuss them with you if you take me into your confidence. But if I am to be placed a step lower, how am I to get over this? Are you going to give me some additional advantages and facilities to make up the loss? Are you going to provide me with funds and so on? Or are you going to keep me in that state perpetually? That is an idea which has been puzzling the minds of most of our people. Hope deferred maketh the heart sick.

In 1921 we were considered to be quite fit in every respect, and it was merely a question of whether we should be re-amalgamated with the Punjab. I was the

first witness to go before the Committee which was appointed, and I said that if we could have full-fledged reforms as a separate unit we should prefer it, but that otherwise we should rather like to go back to the Punjab. If in 1923 we could be entrusted with elected members in the proportion of two-thirds, you will not be surprised to learn that I thought it a very retrograde move when I read in the Simon Report that we were not to have any elected majority at all, and that the elected element was to be chosen by people who were nominated; that is to say, people who were themselves nominated would elect certain people. I do not want to worry you with these details, but we are going backward.

We have had one statesmen in my part of the world, and I am glad to say he remained with us for a fairly long time, but unfortunately it was during the Great War. He put us on the right lines; he established a first-class college and gave us education, and in your official despatches you will find his idea was to make that small unit a model province educationally, intelluctually, economically, technically and so on. I refer to Sir George Roos-Keppel. Unfortunately his name is not well-known outside my province or it would have been greeted with more applause.

After that there was a good deal of trouble and we started going backwards. If there is any increase in taxation at the centre it is at once applied to our corner of the world, but if it is a question of any reform it is said that we are not fit for it. You were not afraid to apply the Sirdar Bill to the North West Frontier Province, though we did not require it and had no need for it. You are not afraid of applying a measure of that sort to the frontier, but when it is a question of electing men to deal with the mending of a few roads, the establishment of a few schools,

or even a hospital, you say "It is a great responsibility, and we cannot entrust you with it." When all your able lawyers and judges have failed to trace the guilty or innocent person, you refer the matter to us, and you allow us to pass a sentence of 14 years' imprisonment; but you will not entrust the mending of a road to us!

It is not a sin to boast of one's own activities here, and I should like to say that I am a person who owns land on both sides of the border, in the independent territory as well as in British territory. I protect myself across the border, and am under the protection of the police inside the border. If I can manage my affairs over there, with all the tenants, including some 60 families of non-Muslims, under my protection, why cannot you entrust your few non-Muslims to me in the settled districts?

Why do you fear? Do you think I shall pass laws which will be most objectionable to the minorities? Do you think I shall pass a law that the dhotis of certain non-Muslims should be cut off? God forbid that I should think of these things. What, then, are you afraid of? Are you afraid that if the Council is set up and a raiding party comes you will not be able to send out your frontier militia and constabulary to intercept it, but will have to wait until the Council has met and has allowed you to intercept them or prevented you from doing so? I cannot understand what is at the bottom of all this. If you fear trouble from my brothers across the border go and take them over. You may disarm them and crush them and spend crores of rupees in doing it, but when the time comes you will find them claiming the same rights as my friend Dr. Moonje claimed the other day.

It is no use my saying that this is the difficulty or that is the difficulty; as I have said, I do not think there is any



insurmountable difficulty. There may have been the idea in the mind of the Viceroy—God knows what his idea was—perhaps it was of the building of a Central Asian Empire, or perhaps it was the fear of Bolshevism. Both those fears have disappeared now. There is no longer any fear of Bolshevism or of Russia, nor can any Central Asian Empire be created, for a free Afghanistan would not allow it.

I shall offer myself for cross-examination to any Committees set up to discuss these questions, and I hope I shall be able to prove that there are no insurmountable difficulties. I claim equal rights. I cannot indulge in threats, like some other people, because I know it is useless to attempt that against the British Empire. I know it is not possible for a few disobedient non-co-operators to upset things; I do not believe in that or advocate that. Mine is only a little appeal to the sense of justice but I will not end without quoting a little proverb in my mother tongue which says that even a flea in your trouser can make you very uncomfortable (Laughter).

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## THE RT. HON. SRINIVASA SASTRI

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Mr. Prime Minister: Two ideas have emerged from the debates to which we have listened and which now dominate our minds. One is that of Dominion Status for India as the natural outcome of India's constitutional evolution. The other is that of federation as the proper form of the future polity of India, including both British India and the Indian States. This latter idea is comparatively new. We have struggled for Dominion Status for some time, and at last it seems to have found acceptance from the spokesmen to whom we have listened, of both the Conservative and the Liberal Parties.

The idea of federation, I must confess, is comparatively new to me. I struggled hard against it until the other day. Now I confess I am a convert. (Applause). I have listened both in private and at this table to the Princes and their spokesmen, and may I say with all due respect to them that they have brought me round to their view both by the sincerity of their declarations as to Dominion Status and by the tone of restraint and moderation in which they have spoken of the terms of federation itself.

It only remains for me to say one word of caution. Great ideas thrown together into the arena of politics sometimes work together and co-operate with each other up to a certain stage, but may tend, when pushed each to its consummation, to collide and even to weaken each other. I do hope that in the deliberations of the Committees to which we shall consign these great topics nothing will be



Believe me, they are not hereditary criminals; they are not savage barbarian hordes; they are not the sworn enemies of Great Britain or of British institutions. They are men of culture, men of honour, most of them, men who have made their mark in the professions. They are our kinsmen both in spirit and by blood. It is a sense of political grievance that has placed them in this position, which we view with so much distrust and so much disapprobation. Remove that discontent and you will find them alongside you, working the new constitution that we shall frame to its highest issues and drawing from those new institutions that we frame all the benefit of which they are capable.

The toils and trials of public life are well-known to us all. I am on the side of law and order. I have never been within proximity of the goal, but I am a political agitator. I know how near I am to those whose methods I join with you in condemning to-day. Often in my life has the Government viewed my activities with suspicion and set its spies upon me. My life has not been one of unalloyed happiness; my way has not been free from thorns—and, Mr. Prime Minister, your experience is not altogether foreign to them.

Let us not be carried away in this matter, then, too much by a sense of self-righteousness. Very little indeed divides those who now champion law and order and those who, impelled by the purest patriotism, have found themselves on the other side. Adopt measures born of conciliation; set the constitution of India in proper order; and we whom this political difference has unhappily divided, will find ourselves once more co-operators for the welfare and contentment and ordered progress of India. Therein lies the strength of the situation to-day. Our



## SARDAR SAHIBZADA SULTAN AHMED

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After the many eloquent speeches to which we have listened during these three days, a very large amount of ground has been covered and it would be futile for me to go over the same ground again. There are a few considerations relating to the States to which I desire to draw attention in very simple words.

That the future Government of India in which the States may participate can only be federal admits of no doubt, for in any arrangement that may be made for the future government of India the States will have, and rightly have, an adequate share and an effective voice.

His Highness the Maharaja of Patiala yesterday did well in emphasising the great services the States have rendered to India as a whole, and that is a truth that cannot be emphasised too strongly and too often.

There is one general misconception about the States which I should like to attempt to remove. It is generally thought by those who have no inner knowledge of the conditions that an Indian Prince is an arbitrary Ruler. Nothing can be more removed from the truth. I speak not as an outside observer, but from an inner and a most intimate knowledge of facts. I have been serving the Gwalior State now for more than a quarter of a century, twenty years of which were spent in the closest of administrative association with the late Maharaja, and since his death, I have been a member of the Council of Regency. A very tender regard for the feelings and sentiments of all classes of the people, strict meting out

of justice, uninfluenced in any way by caste, race or religious leanings or prejudices—these have been the cardinal and guiding principles of rule in Gwalior. The Maharaja lived a most simple life, indeed a frugal life, and worked harder than anyone else in the constant pursuit of the good of his people. His privy purse never exceeded three lacs of rupees a year, and every pie that was saved was earmarked strictly for some State purpose.

Such a rule I would not designate as arbitrary. If I can coin an expression I would call it Democratic autocracy. This might sound a contradiction in terms but it has the essentials of Democracy, namely, that the supreme Rex governing all actions of the Government are the sentiments and wishes of the people, and there is the added advantage of quick decision and action.

I make bold to say that the States in India would not have lasted as they have lasted if they were not the true expressions of the sentiments and feelings of the people.

Now stepping out of the States' boundary, we are confronted by a most formidable, complicated and intricate problem in British India. The solution of that problem requires all the calmness, sanity, understanding, and sympathy that both the Indians and the English can bring to bear upon it. This can only be if we are fair and just to one another, recognising and sympathising with each other's point of view.

A just and unbiassed observer will find ample evidence that despite defects and drawbacks, Englishmen have rendered great and enduring services to India. They have, in many directions honestly and earnestly worked for the betterment of the country and its people. Even the Indian National Congress owes its birth to an Englishman, the late Mr. A. O. Hume, a member of the Indian Civil

Service. Englishmen in every walk of life have assisted in its growth and development. The late Mr. Yule, a merchant prince of Calcutta, was once its President. So was Mr. Bradlaugh, a member of Parliament, and Sir William Wedderburn, also a member of the Indian Civil Service. And I need hardly mention the lifelong and devoted service to the cause of Indian uplift of that great Englishwoman, Dr. Annie Besant, who, though over 82 years of age, is still giving her best to India. And it is as the result of their great work in India that we are gathered together in this great and epoch-making Conference.

It is no small tribute to the great work Englishmen have done in India and for India that there should be in India a practically universal demand for the establishment of British institutions.

On the other hand I feel no doubt that Englishmen will be the last not to appreciate the desire of Indians for the direction and control of their own affairs. That desire is embedded in human nature. When God sent down manna to the remote ancestors of the human race, a universal prayer went up that they should be furnished with the means of obtaining their own sustenance, as a result of their own efforts.

There is nothing to prevent Indians and Englishmen working together in harmony. This statement I base upon my personal experience. At Gwalior at one time, working in various Departments under me, there were no less than ten Englishmen, and yet I found not the slightest difficulty in dealing with them, and they obeyed orders as any Indian subordinate did. I have Englishmen working under me to-day. An Englishman by his upbringing and training is a well-disciplined individual.



As regards India being made a Dominion, I think the question has two very distinct aspects. One is India having the status of a Dominion, and the other is India functioning as a full-fledged Dominion. Indians are a highly sensitive people; especially on matters of their izzat and honour they feel acutely. As they are situated to-day they cannot hold up their heads vis-a-vis the people of other countries; they feel a sense of inferiority which cannot but be humiliating. I cannot think that Englishmen, to whom matters of honour and self-respect are of supreme importance, will not sympathise with that sentiment.

I think I am right in saying that there is no thinking Indian who believes that to-day India is in a position to shoulder the entire responsibility of a full-fledged Dominion; that position can only be reached by stages. Therefore, there is no foundation for the fear that if India is declared to possess the status of a Dominion an immediate demand for transferring to Indian shoulders the entire responsibility of Government and defence will be made.

The declaration of India as a Dominion will serve a double purpose; it will satisfy the natural desire, nay, the intense craving of Indians to be reckoned as equal partners in the British Commonwealth of Nations, and it will be a sure earnest of the fulfilment of the promise that England desires India to be, in the fulness of time, a full-fledged Dominion.

I am not without hope that the Indians and English will labour whole-heartedly together for the happiness and prosperity of India means greater happiness and prosperity for England.

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## MR. H. P. MODY

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In the 10 minutes' existence allowed to me I wish to make a few general observations on the place of commerce and industry in the India of to-morrow which we are met here to fashion; but the trend of the discussions in the last few days makes it impossible that I should remain altogether silent on the political issues that confront India and the Empire.

In the earlier stages of the discussion we heard a great deal of the value of conservatism as a force in the affairs of men. While I admire the courage of those people who expounded that ideal, I am afraid I was irresistibly reminded of a schoolboy howler which stated that another name for conservative was preservative!

However, this Conference, to my way of thinking, will fail and fail miserably if it does not fix its gaze steadfastly on the goal in view, and if it does not stoutly refuse to be obsessed with the dangers and the difficulties on the way, many of which are imaginary.

Lord Reading in the remarks which he placed before the Conference to-day talked of the goal and the pace. If the goal is one, I hope Sir, it will not be a measured pace but a rapid race towards the goal so that India may be contented and prosperous. The fundamental conception of this Conference should be not what can be safely conceded to India, but what can be safely denied to India. That should be the fundamental conception, and I see that the choice before England to-day is first this—either take

India into the Commonwealth of British Nations as a free willing partner or drive her more and more to courses of desperation and disorder if you will.

In the process, Sir, you are going to lose the friendship and goodwill of those powerful classes. They may not be powerful in numbers to-day, but powerful for everything else which counts in the life of the people. It may be that we to-day, who represent those classes, have not the ear of our countrymen, but we shall have it to-morrow. At any rate we are the class which is on the side of order to-day.

Now, I want to say a few words about the interests of those I represent at this Conference, and I would begin by saying that commerce and industry are the life-blood of a nation, and political freedom is not going to mean anything to us unless we have economic freedom which will enable us to regulate our economic and industrial development on lines which we regard as most conducive to our interest. (Applause).

I have a tremendous admiration for Lord Irwin as has everyone else who has come in contact with him. He is a big man, and we have a great respect for him. But it would be idle to pretend that the economic policy of India to-day is controlled in the sole interest of India, or that it is in accord with the interests of the people.

Lord Peel ventured on an eulogy on British rule, and I am entirely with him when he talks of the achievements of the British race in India. Every one of us here knows that those achievements have been great, but it will not be contended that mistakes have not been made, and let us not forget that there have been many dark pages and innumerable instances of the way in which the industries

the commerce and the trade of India have been neglected or ruthlessly sacrificed.

Lord Peel did not think that even the mild observation of my friend Mr. Jayakar should be allowed in regard to monopolies. I am afraid it would be impossible for me to talk of replying to that statement, but I would be prepared to reply to that statement in some other place. I will only content myself here with saying that Lord Peel has entirely mis-read the history of the economic progress of India in the last fifty years, and I am afraid he has forgotten a good deal more than he has learnt. Considering the handicaps to trade and industry all these years, in spite of the welcome change of policy in recent time, the surprise is not that India has done so little, but that India has achieved anything at all. And when Lord Peel talks of efficiency and enterprise he will concede that it is only by the exercise of those particular virtues, namely of enterprise and efficiency that India has been able to achieve that little progress she has achieved in the last few years. My Friend, Mr. Jinnah, a few minutes ago said that the commercial classes were ranged with other interests in demanding immediate Dominion Status for India, a status which would assure us freedom. The present movement is the work of one man, and I will just amplify Mr. Jinnah's remarks. I come from a Province where that one man's word is law, and where he is constantly followed by large masses of the people. Why is that so? It is because, I say it without rancour or bitterness, my class and others have been forced to the conclusion that unless India is politically free she cannot be healthy and she cannot look forward to industrial development. That is the backbone of the political movement which we all know. The position could not have been p ♦

more effectively than when you said that the party of India was not an opinion but it was a fact, and you cannot go forward when 70% of the population is dependent upon agriculture with a poor soil and precarious rain which characterise our seasons. So long as India is not industrially developed and the mass of the population is dependent upon agriculture, its progress will be exceedingly limited, whatever political freedom you confer on her.

My last point is that political freedom without economic freedom means nothing to India, and may mean a snare and a delusion, because taxation and finances will fall upon the population of a country which is mainly agricultural, and one that will not be able to withstand a modern system of government without economic freedom which will ensure to her a future place in the Commonwealth of Nations.

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## MR FAZL UL-HUQ

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In the ceaseless flow of oratory which you have permitted and which even the ten minutes rule does not seem able to restrict or restrain there is just a chance of the real issues being completely swept away, and of getting out of sight. It seems necessary, therefore, that someone at the close of this debate should try and keep the task before us. India wants a full measure of self government, the fullest that can be accorded her. It requires no amount of oratory to convince anyone in this Conference that that is at present the immediate practical demand of united India. There are difficulties in the way but the real problem is how to give India the fullest measure of responsible government consistent with the difficulties of the position and the responsibilities of the British nation. That being the simple problem, I submit that no amount of oratory, however loftily conceived, will find a real solution unless the delegates assembled at this Conference themselves by way of negotiation come to some sort of concession of each of their rights, and present to this Conference a real constitution for the Government of India. I ask my fellow delegates to remember that there are before us one of two alternatives either we will come to some agreement and present a united front, or we will leave it to the British people themselves to prepare for us a constitution for the future Government of India. But what the delegates have to consider is that there are considerable objections to the latter point of view. If the constitution is framed by the British people it will be framed with some obvious disadvantages. In the first place we will be facing the hostility of the British nation if after

sitting a few months here and discussing the question of the future constitution for India we profess our inability to come to some agreement, and tell them we are leaving the question in their own hands to decide. Secondly, it will be unsuitable to the Indian people because anything coming from British brains or statesmanship would not be acceptable to various classes, namely the politically-minded people of India. Thirdly, I would refer to the colossal ignorance about India which generally prevails among political leaders in this country. Only the other day, Commander Kenworthy, a Member of Parliament and a very prominent member of the Labour Party who had been to India, who set himself to say something about the complexities of the Indian problem contributed an article to the *Review of Reviews* under the heading of "British Policy in India", and there he says :

The communal (or religious) differences in India present perhaps the most serious problem of all. It is a fact, admitted to me personally, and regretted, by such great leaders as Gandhi and Malaviya on the Hindu side, and Jinnah on the Moslem side, that if anything, the communal differences have become worse in recent years. (Laughter.)

I ask the delegates to consider whether they are not going to make a strenuous effort to settle and compose their differences and come to some settlement, or are they going to leave it to Commander Kenworthy and his colleagues? It is to the interests of us all and to the present Party in power to frame a constitution for the future government of India. The Mohammadan position has been explained by Sir Muhammad Shafi and Mr. Jinnah, and we should compose our differences and come to some agreement which will represent the progressive ideals of this land.

The moment we have been convinced that in the future constitution of India not merely Mussalmans but all

minorities—Indian Christians, Sikhs, Parsis, Untouchables, the commercial interests and credit interests—will be safe and secure, that all the various interests will have the fullest measure of self determination and self advancement, we shall not only register our consent, but we shall go much further than the most enthusiastic member of the Indian National Congress in demanding the fullest measure of responsible Government for India (Hear, hear)

But, Sir, if that is the position, consider for a moment the meaning and the nature of what are suggested as safe guards I purposely do not wish to use the word "safe guard" It is not a very dignified term What is really meant is this That in a democracy, the government of the people by the people must be the government of the people by all the people, not the government of the people by only a section of the people (Hear, hear) I wish to read out to this House two or three sentences from the words of John Stuart Mill in his well known book on *Representative Government* That great authority says

That the minority must yield to the majority, the smaller number to the greater, is a familiar idea and accordingly men think that there is no necessity for using their minds any further, and it does not occur to them that there is a medium between allowing the smaller number to become equally powerful with the greater and blotting out the smaller number altogether The majority of electors would always have a majority of representatives, but a minority of the electors should always have a minority of representatives, but man for man they should be as fully represented as the majority Unless they are, there is no equal government, but a government of inequality and privilege, if one part of the people rule over the rest there is a part whose equal share of influence in the representation is withheld from them, contrary to a just government, but above all, contrary to the principle of democracy, which professes equality as its very root and foundation

I am reading these few lines to this Conference because I want to commend them to those brother Delegates of mine who are to form the Committee which is going to be proposed.



I submit to this Conference that the present moment is one of the most opportune for settling all those differences which have disgraced the fair name of India. (Applause.) We have in India a Viceroy the very mention of whose name evokes the most enthusiastic gratitude from our people. We have in power a party in England who are pledged to democracy and to break down all those barriers of inequality between man and man. We have a genuine atmosphere of sympathy, of tolerance and of goodwill pervading England which had induced the other political parties to co-operate with the party in power in evolving a system of administration which should be acceptable to all. Above all, we see present here a galaxy of Indian Princes who have come down from their high pedestal to brush shoulders with commoners in trying to find a solution for the future government of India. If, in these circumstances, we cannot come to some sort of a settlement it is much better that all honest men should come forward and say that although we very much desire self-government, India is not fit for self-government, because Indians, however much they may claim the art of statesmanship, have yet to learn the very rudimentary lesson that true patriotism must transcend all communal and sectarian considerations.

Sir, if we fail we fail most ignobly. Great Britain has offered us the best of opportunities and it is for us to rise to the height of the occasion and to make the most of the opportunities that have been offered to us.

Before I sit down, to my countrymen who constitute the majority community I wish to make a fervent appeal. I wish to tell them that they must take due note of the awakening of feeling amongst the Muhammadans of India, and just as they have ventured to warn the Englishmen

against the danger of ignoring the political upheaval in India, I also warn them against any disregard of the fervour in the Muslim community. It would be surprising if the Muslims had been unaffected by the impulse of the political aspirations which are finding expression throughout India. How can the Mussulmans be impervious to such influences? The blood of the slave does not run in our veins. Until recently the Mussulmans held the sceptre of sovereignty in India, and along with their fellow men in other lands the seventy million Mussulmans in India have traditions of sovereignty and conquest extending over thirteen centuries and three continents. Sir, I ask my brethren to remember that Muslim India has been deeply stirred, and will be satisfied with nothing less than the fullest recognition of their legitimate rights.

To the British Government I on my part wish to strike a note of warning. If by any chance the British Indian Delegation cannot come to any agreed settlement, in all probability—nay certainly—the task of framing the constitution will fall on the British people. Let me warn the British Government most solemnly—and I would be failing in my duty if I did not do so—that they must not forget the claims, the legitimate aspirations, of seventy millions of Mussulmans, as well as those of the other minority communities in India. ("Hear, hear.") So far as the Mussulmans are concerned, not once or twice but times without number British statesmen have broken faith with the Mussulmans. I hope that experiment will not be repeated any longer. ("Hear, hear.") I hope, on the contrary that if we work in a spirit of tolerance and goodwill we shall still be able to surmount the difficulties. I hope that as the future unfolds itself our Motherland will be covered with eternal glory.

## SIR PHEROZE SETHNA

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Mr. Prime Minister: This Round Table Conference is the first of its kind since, in the in-erutable dispensation of divine Providence, India has come under British rule. At the same time, it is but inevitable that such a Conference should be held at the present juncture, because India has now reached a stage in its political and constitutional advancement when the determination of its further constitutional progress and reforms cannot be made by Great Britain alone.

Sir, we who have accepted your invitation have incurred the very great displeasure of our countrymen, and even to-day we received telegrams from individuals and bodies asking us to return to India by the first boat available because they do not believe that the work of this Round Table Conference is to result in anything satisfactory to India. We, however, who have come here have still faith in the British sense of justice, and we trust that no matter what certain sections of the British public may say or write, the representatives of the three political Parties who sit round this table with us come here with open minds, and, after hearing us, will be prepared to give what we want; and what we want and will be satisfied with is nothing short of Dominion status with safeguards during the transitional period.

Mr. Chairman, we maintain that safeguards are certainly necessary during the transition period, and particularly in the matter of defence. If, however, we are not prepared in the matter of defence to take it up

immediately, the blame does not lie so much with us as with the British themselves. We have been talking of monopolies for the last two days. Has it struck my Lord Peel that in the case of the commissioned ranks of the army—and there are 3,200 commissioned officers—up to 1918 not one single Indian had attained the rank of a commissioned officer? Is not that monopoly? And even then, thereafter, since there has been admission to Sandhurst, and latterly elsewhere, the number of Indians in the commissioned ranks has not yet reached 100.

As a business man I will confine myself to those remarks which fell from Lord Peel on the subject of vested interests of the European community in India. He has been answered to a certain extent by Dr. Moonje yesterday, and by my friend Sir Mirza Ismail and by Mr. Mody to day. All that I want to impress upon this Conference is that if Indians are given the chance they will prove themselves worthy of undertaking any position that is entrusted to them, and the same will apply to the army. Let me quote but one instance. The Government of India is divided into different departments. There is one department known as that of Education, Lands and Health. Till last year every single superior officer in that Department was an Indian. This year all are Indians except one. May I ask the Right Honourable the Secretary of State if he finds any fault with the working of that Department, or whether that Department is inferior in its work as compared with the other Departments of the Government of India? Sir, it is the keeping back of Indians which has helped the European community, the commercial European community, who, if they have not been given monopolies, have been shown preference, which preference has resulted in monopolies, as I will try to explain.

Dr. Moonje quoted an instance of monopolies going back more than a century. I will give you instances of monopolies before our eyes. A few years ago the contract which a European-owned steamship company enjoyed for the carriage of coal from Calcutta to Rangoon for the Burmese Railways was about to lapse. An Indian shipping company, after tender, received very evasive replies, until one fine day they were told that a fresh contract had been entered into, and entered into for the long space of ten years; but what is more, although Government were asked as to the rates at which this contract was placed, to this day no answer has been given. May I ask Lord Peel if that is a monopoly or not? It is preference which amounts to monopoly.

That is not all. Take a case of railway freights. That is one sordid history of the railway board endeavouring to help the importer of non-Indian goods to the detriment of Indian enterprise. Take, again, the case of shipping rebates, which amounts to nothing less than crushing at the start any Indian steamer company.

Again, that is not all. In a communication by the Bengal Chamber of Commerce it was asserted that the European Companies had entered into an agreement with the jute mills of Bengal whereby the jute mills promised not to buy any jute carried on Indian vessels. To make this further possible, Insurance Companies, which at that time were mostly non-Indian, raised the rates of insurance premium on jute carried in vessels which were Indian. Is this not monopoly? Is this not preference? This, Sir, is what Indians have suffered from for all these years. My noble Lord said that they were not monopolies, but these were vested interests created by skill, by energy and by commercial enterprise. I submit that Indians are capable

of showing the same skill, the same energy and the same commercial enterprise, given the same opportunity. I submit that, not in a spirit of animosity, but I want to rely on the actual facts, which I hope will not occur in the future, that they have not had the same opportunities. Blood is thicker than water. An English merchant has ready access to an official. He can settle things very easily, if not at the office then at his Club over a peg of whisky or a glass of vermouth, whereas the Indian merchant might have to kick his heels for days, perhaps for weeks, before he can even gain admission. There was more of this formerly than there is to day. If that is changed to day we owe it to that Secretary of State of illustrious memory than whom no one has done more for India—I mean the late Mr. Edwin Samuel Montagu. (Applause)

I must not forget one other item in regard to monopolies. Are there not many instances of Regencies in Indian States where the Resident, because he was all powerful during the regency, has given monopolies to European firms to the exclusion of the subjects of the State and of British Indians? I am surprised that my noble Lord is not aware of the facts which I have given, and which I could easily multiply, and which he must have known in his capacity as Secretary of State, which dignified position he held more than once.

I mentioned Mr. Montagu's good work for India. I rejoice to know, also, that every single Indian present, whenever the name of Lord Irwin has been mentioned, has applauded it—and rightly. But, Mr. Prime Minister, there is one other name to which you will permit me to refer and in connection with which you will allow me to thank you yourself in that you selected him for the office—I mean

Mr. Benn. (Loud applause). We recognise the worth of Mr. Benn. We recognise his goodwill. I know that if left to himself he would go as far as he possibly could in the matter of helping us.

In the Government of India Despatch it is said distinctly that, for reasons advanced, finance should not be transferred. May I ask how much the Government of India has contributed towards the advancement of the credit of India? Let me refer to an instance which occurred in India less than six months ago. I do not know whether it was of their own instance or whether it was with the permission and knowledge of the Government of India; but the Government of Bombay issued a circular from the Central Government Press of Bombay, which they broadcasted by thousands, in which, in order to meet the boycott movement, they deprecated every Indian commercial enterprise. I will quote one sentence in regard to banking. They say: "British banking is the mainstay of our banking system in India. It provides wide facilities and the strongest security. Why should people in this country ignore these secure concerns in favour of much less stable ones" meaning Indian concerns. Is that the way the Government of India propose to advance the credit of India? In answer to that I would say that when India is entrusted with her own finances and when she knows that she will have to borrow money from outside the country, she will do it in such a manner that her credit will be very greatly enhanced.

Lord Peel complained that none of the speakers who preceded him made any reference to the devoted services of Englishmen who had gone out to India in the different services. [There was no occasion to do so. We are always prepared to admit that Englishmen out there have

certainly given of their best. At the same time they will admit that India has rewarded their services in a manner in which no other country pays its Civil Servants. Again it must not be forgotten that India pays to the tune of £4,000,000 annually in the way of pensions, both civil and military.

What do we ask for? As Mr. Jinnah pointed out, we want to be masters in our own house. We do not want to rob our European friends of their vested interests, but I would ask this Conference to remember that the vested interests were made up by them, themselves, when Indians had not the ghost of a chance to come in. Are we asking you to do any more than what you are doing in your own country? Take the cinema industry. Because you discovered that the British cinema film industry was not getting along as well as it ought to be doing you imposed a quota. Then there was another case of an electrical company in regard to which you laid down by law that the percentage of shares held by Britishers must be no less than 51 per cent.

I have exceeded my time, and I will not say anything further. All that I want to impress upon this Conference is that if I have been forced to make the remarks I have made, it is just in answer to Lord Peel. I repeat that they are not made in a spirit of animus. I have only placed before you actual facts. I sincerely trust that when we go back with a constitution which will help us politically and economically, we Indian and European merchants will work together side by side for the advancement of India and England and consequently of the Empire,

*THE CHAIRMAN: I think I shall rule now that Lord Peel has been most amply answered!*



## SIR AKBAR HYDARI

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In view of the fact that most of my ground has been covered by the Princes on the Indian States Delegation I should not have taken any part of your time. Representing, however, His Exalted Highness the Nizam, I feel I cannot sit silent but should express the view, in a few minutes, of the Hyderabad State that we shall not in any way be lagging behind in giving such assistance and help as will bring about a form of Government which will satisfy Indian aspirations and which will function successfully under the difficult conditions that prevail in India to-day. I would merely ask the Delegates from British India, who have shown such strength of mind and patriotism in meeting here in face of so much opposition and contumely, to work for a constitution which will ensure a government national in every sense but which, by its stability, will endure and not merely a constitution which will satisfy for the moment the uninstructed. In the same spirit do I ask the representatives of the British Parliament here to-day not to refuse a responsibility to a great Indian Federal polity within the Empire. Infuse into it the elements that make for settled and orderly government, for the preservation of the autonomy of the States, and last but not least for the adequate defence of our frontiers against external aggression. I can assure you that in such a case your countrymen, who have done so much for India in the past, will have a welcome and an honoured place in the India of the future.

I believe that God's purpose can be read in history. I believe that it is not for nothing that this Island set in the Western seas has secured domination over our vast country and has held it for 150 years. I believe that we are now here to reap the harvest of these years of experience and discipline in a greater and more united India than our history has ever recorded.

## SIR CHIMANLAL SETALVAD

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You, Sir, and other members of the British Delegation must have been struck with the unanimity with which the Delegates from British India of all groups, of all communities and of all sections, as well as the Indian Princes, have demanded full self-government for India. To the Indian Princes who have so patriotically stood by us our obligations are due, and I have every hope that when we sit down to hammer out a federated constitution for India the Indian Princes will therein occupy their rightful place.

I entirely agree with my friends Mr. Jinnah and Mr. Fazl-ul-Huq (I am sorry they are not here for the moment) that in any constitution which you frame the minority communities must be made to feel that they are safe. I can assure the minority communities that, so far as in us lies, the majority community will be able to agree to such safeguards as will satisfy them.

It has been said—I will not mention the name of Lord Peel: it has been mentioned so often before—that we Delegates here have not made sufficient acknowledgment of the very good work done by England in India in the department of education and in various other ways. To my mind it is profitless on the present occasion to go into those questions, because one may well feel disposed to ask whether it is an achievement of which anyone can be proud that at the end of 150 years of British rule the percentage of literates in British India is no more than about 9 per cent. whereas you find that in Indian India, in

progressive States like Mysore, Baroda and Travancore, the percentage is very nearly 90 per cent.

Can it also be said that in various other matters the achievement has been such as commends itself entirely to us? It has been officially recognised that many millions of human beings in British India exist on insufficient food; they cannot afford more than one meal a day. I venture to say you will not find that condition of affairs in Indian India.

It has been said that you ought to go by easy stages, that you must not quicken the pace, that you must be satisfied for the present with the sort of provincial autonomy reported on by the Statutory Commission. When that was mentioned my friend Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru interjected "Bogus", and I entirely agree with him in that description of the provincial autonomy described by the Statutory Commission. Can that provincial autonomy be described as a real one under which you will have official Ministers? There would still be a large portion of the budget non-votable, and all the services—recruitment, discipline and so on—would still be in the hands of the Secretary of State. If you call that provincial autonomy you may, but I do not call it genuine or real provincial autonomy at all.

Those who say "Go slowly; do not quicken the pace" are like some parents, who will never realise that the ward is no longer a ward but has now become a self-determining adult. Those parents and those politicians who take that view are sadly mistaken. The ward who has now become a self-determining adult is determined to have his way, to come into his own, to have the management of his own estate in his own hands. It does not do

for the guardian to say "If I hand over your inheritance to you, you may mismanage it, you may manage it inefficiently, and you will commit mistakes." Mr. Prime Minister, we are perfectly conscious that we may commit mistakes and that for sometime our administration may be comparatively inefficient, but we are determined to go through that stage, for we want to come into our own. We may not manage things as efficiently as you are doing now, but it is our affair and we want to be allowed to manage it ourselves.

It has been said that if you take a constitution from here, a full democratic government, the moment that is given, power will be wrested from you, the Delegates who come here, by the people who have recently created all the trouble in India. I will not repeat the answer given very effectively to that suggestion by my friend Mr. Sastri. You have to make up your minds what you will do, and I beseech the British Delegation to think of the alternatives before them and to choose wisely. You can satisfy Indian aspirations and give power to India in her own affairs, and then, as sure as fate, those people whom you call irresponsible at present, who are now creating all the trouble in India, will be the first to come in and work that constitution in an ordered manner. On the other hand, if you do not do that you can make up your minds—I do not say this as a threat, but with all gravity and with all the emphasis I can command—that the future is very black indeed both for India and England. If you do not grant now what India wants the position will be this: you will have to enter into a long-drawn struggle, increasing everyday. You may put down disorder; you are bound to put it down, and you will do so; but at every stage it will sooner or later again break forth with increased vigour, and

you cannot rule 320 million people continuously by force and by military power.

I trust, therefore, you will make a wise choice. You can make India discontented, which will mean ruination for her and may mean ruination to England, or you can make now a contented India which will be the brightest jewel in the Empire and its greatest glory, and which will enhance the reputation of the Empire which, with all its faults, has excited not only the admiration but even the envy of the rest of the world.

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SIXTH DAY, NOV. 21.

RAJA SHER MUHAMMAD KHAN

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Before I begin my speech I welcome the ruling of the Chairman that there should be a time-limit of ten minutes because as a soldier I am a man of action, not of words. Mr. Prime Minister, as the representative of the Army, and therefore of the classes from which it is drawn, my first and foremost duty is to assure you of our steadfast loyalty and unshakeable devotion to His Imperial Majesty the King Emperor and his Throne. We are thus ever ready to uphold the cause of the British Commonwealth of which India forms an integral part. It is not without considerable difference that I have risen to address this gathering wherein is collected together the intellect, the character and the experience of India and Great Britain. I am and have been a soldier content to serve in the Army to the best of my humble and limited capacity, taking pride in the performance of those routine duties which, however monotonous they may appear to civilians, are the foundations of the true discipline of character. I believe, Sir, that the great and noble contribution which the Army can make and has made in the past to the solution of India's problems is the building up of a strong, self-reliant, vigorous and self-dependent Indian nation, cemented by those bonds of comradeship, professional pride and military discipline which the people of India have always displayed in the hour of greatest glory.

I am a stranger to politics, ignorant alike of the niceties of Parliament, indifferent to the arts of the

demagogue, and impervious to the appeals of self-advertisement. My life has been spent on the battlefields, on the snowy peaks of Asia Minor and the fertile valley of the Nile, and on the rocks of the frontier where Sir Abdul Qaiyum owns the land. China, Iraq, Turkey, Egypt and India have been the chief theatres where the regiment to which I have the honour to belong has fought. I went through the ordeal of the world-wide war, supremely confident of the justice of our cause, and determined to fight for those principles which were so gloriously vindicated on many a battlefield throughout Europe and Asia. Even now, I can picture to myself the scene. I can recall the field which seemed covered with poppies and call to memory the heroic deeds of thousands of my comrades in arms who laid down their lives with a smile of supreme satisfaction and cheerfully obeyed the call of duty on the inhospitable rocks and inaccessible creeks of the Frontier. While the politicians are busy discussing forms, modes and aspects of the constitution, while they are busy with the permutation and combination of policies, programmes and principles we martial races of India guard the Frontier from the incessant raids of the stranger. It is the Army which acts as a bulwark against the limitless ambitions and boundless greed, not only of the Trans-Frontier people, but also of foreign powers. The long coast line of Madras and Bombay is protected by the might of the British Navy. If the British ships are withdrawn, even for a day, the teeming millions of Madras and Bombay would be exposed to the fury of powers which I need not mention.

I have deemed it necessary to state these facts as they are consistently ignored by the framers of constitutions. I belong to a community which has given a splendid account of itself in the past. Its achievements in the



domain of art, culture, learning and science are engraved in the hearts of those countless millions in India who carry on the great tradition of our ancestors. As monuments the record of its achievements is embodied in those great institutions which have stood the test of time and are now the foundation of modern India. The Punjab, the Province to which I have the honour to belong, was ruled by the Muslims for seven centuries, and though it was occupied by Ranjit Singh and his army for the brief space of thirty years, it is and must remain the centre of Muslim activity in India.

It is the focus of Muslim endeavour, Muslim energy, and Muslim capacity for a practical, orderly and harmonious life. Not only has my province made great strides in education, but also there has been a renaissance in the rural and urban parts of the Province, and I am not exaggerating when I say that modern Punjab has risen like Phoenix, from its ashes, and is showing all the vitality and vigour of a martial Province.

The Punjab is the shield, spear-head and sword-hand of India, and it has won this proud title by its association with the flower of the British Army in every campaign in Asia. I am sure that our most popular Governor, Sir Malcolm Hailey, who is fortunately here present, will agree with me. It was the Punjabi soldier with his simple life and sturdy spirit, who saved India during the confusion and anarchy of the Mutiny. The splendid band of fighters who poured into the rich and fertile Gangetic Plains from the defiles of many a Punjab hill rendered services which are recorded in the annals of British endeavour in letters of gold. At the beginning of the War the Punjab had about one hundred thousand men of all ranks in the Army. At the close of the War no less than half a million had served

with the Colours. The number of fighting men raised during the four years of War was roughly 360,000, more than half the total number raised in India.

Speaking at Rawalpindi, on February 6th, 1921, His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught, used these memorable words—"The achievement of the Punjab was indeed remarkable. Even before the War the Punjab had a name familiar in the military annals of the Empire, but during the War she became a household word, not only on account of the number of men from the Punjab who joined the Colours, but also on account of the splendid fighting qualities they displayed in many a campaign."

The Muhammadan Community supplied more than half the number of recruits raised during the four years of War. In fact, two Muslim districts of Rawalpindi and Jhelum, out of a total male population of a quarter of a million, sent nearly thirty thousand men with the Colours during the last year of the War.

Mr. Prime Minister, I have supplied these figures, not in a spirit of vain glory or self-praise. I have done so because I feel there is a possibility of our losing sight of the fundamental fact that the government is a government of men, and a constitution cannot be manufactured to order. It must be adapted to the capacities, tradition and environment of each country. I have no desire to discuss the political problems which confront you. I do not wish to enlarge on either the necessity or the difficulty of Dominion Status. My point is that our entire scheme of constitution would be a complete failure unless we make adequate provision for the Indian Army.

If India wants to be a mistress in her own household, if she is keen on acquiring a status which will ensure her equality with the Dominions, the problems of the Army

must be faced by her with courage and candour. The position now is that the number of Indians who have received Commissions in his Majesty's Forces is alarmingly low. The one principle which must be kept permanently in view is that there should be no duality in the Army. The Government has propounded a scheme of duality in the Central Government; the Indian Statutory Commission has devised a still more complicated and impractical scheme. They recommend the maintenance of an Imperial Army and Dominion Army. 'In my humble opinion duality in the Army will disorganise the whole machinery of the Army department. It will produce constant friction, breed innumerable troubles, and lead to extravagance and even chaos. The Army in India must be one and indivisible.

Having stated this basic principle, let me deal with some of its implications. If India achieves a Federal Government, and I cannot conceive any other form of Government in such a vast country, she will have a National Army, setting the highest standard in 'organising the resources of men and materials and focussing her needs, the building up of an efficient and striking fighting machine.

The National army must, however, be supplemented by Citizen Militia or Military Police maintained by each Federal Province of British India. The powers of the National army over the Citizen Militia will be varied. There must be co-ordination of supervision and control. I cannot contemplate the possibility of a Citizen Militia of each province acting independently of others of the National army. This would produce chaos and disorder. As British Indian States gain in experience, this control might be relaxed to some extent. Whilst it is essential that the individuality and freedom of the Citizen Militia of each

province should be maintained intact, it is no less essential that there should be supervision by, and co-ordination with the National army. The National army must be under a Council, consisting of the Viceroy, Commander-in-Chief and other Members of specialised experience, *and must be free from the ebb and flow of Assembly politics.*

This is my conception of the part which the Army will play in the centre as well as in the provinces of Federal India.

This brings me to another problem, which the Round Table Conference will have to discuss. One aspect of this is the provision of Officers for the Indian Army. I am convinced that excellent material exists in India for officers and that if opportunities were provided for Indians, the requisite number of officers would have been forthcoming in large numbers. It must be admitted that the methods adopted hitherto for the supply of officers have not been satisfactory. I need not go into details, as these problems were discussed exhaustively by the Sandhurst Committee. I am strongly of the opinion that an Indian Sandhurst should be created, and that the number of Commissions to be given to Indians should be rapidly increased. It is obvious that the rate of advance will depend upon numerous factors, and I am not going to lay down here the minimum number of years during which the Indian army should be "Indianised." Again, under zeal for Indianization, we must not overlook the important fact that not all parts of India can produce recruits in sufficient numbers. Whatever the theorists may say about the absence of non-martial races in India the palpable and vivid realization of the fundamental facts of history and physical geography, environment and climate, must be kept permanently in view. There are some parts of India where recruits of the requi-

site stamp can be raised. There are other parts where the absence of martial tradition, the inclemencies of climate and the nature of environment and occupation, render efficient service impossible. If the Army of New India is to be efficient *it must contain the flower of its manhood, the cream of the Society. It must contain men who are determined and prepared to die*, and not logicians to whom mere physical abstractions make greater appeal than solid realities.

Hence the martial races, and the martial provinces must be specially utilised for the purpose. This seems to me to be an indispensable preliminary to any successful experiment in the necessary National Army.

I have not discussed the question of internal organization of the Army, nor have I dealt with the numerous other problems which arise out of the subjects which I have sketched. It is unnecessary for me to do so, as I think that it will be found that a Committee of Defence, which this Conference should establish will be the proper body for this purpose. Such a Committee seems to me to be absolutely necessary as the structure of our Constitution will be shaky and very unsound until it is based on a practical and efficient system of a National Army from our Common Motherland.

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## H. H. THE AGA KHAN

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Mr. Prime Minister : I did not intend speaking here either to-day or at any stage of these proceedings, but some of the members of the British Indian Delegation had told me, as recently as last night and this morning, that it was my duty to express my views. I have come quite unprepared, but the best preparation of all has been the proceedings of this Conference (Hear, hear). You, Sir, and the British representatives of the three Parties of the state have heard practically every school of Indian thought. From the Hindus to the Muslims, coming down across the centre, nearly every school has spoken. Their Highnesses, the Princes, have spoken. If we eliminate all differences, there is on one point complete unanimity. We all ask for a full measure of Self-Government. (Applause). I think, as Chairman of the British Indian Delegation, working in co-operation with the two other Delegations, I can say that we are all unitedly asking for that. We ask you to promise us the framework. If the picture that we are to paint on it is unsatisfactory to any of the important minorities or to the Princes or to a small section of the minorities, we will try again—(Applause)—and if we fail we will try again—(Renewed Applause)—and we will continue trying till we produce something that will be generally satisfactory. I for one am particularly anxious that it shall be in a form which will ensure that not only every Indian minority but the British commercial element in India shall be satisfied that their interests are safe in their hands. As to the interests of this country

a united India could offer her a far greater security as to her commercial interests than anything she has at present—could offer you a long dated treaty on the lines of the German-Russian Treaty of 1904. For many years that would ensure your commerce fair and equitable treatment, and that would give your people a sense of security. The same applies to debt and to other interests which could be infinitely safer than merely relying as at present, on the strength of this country and not on a consented agreement with India.

Mr. Prime Minister, there is no reason why—if we can produce a federal scheme that will please the Princes, that will please the Hindus, that will please the Muslims, that will please the smaller minorities and that will satisfy all the legitimate commercial interests and at the same time for a period which has certain objects—there is no reason why we should not at this moment start on the basis of full self-government and responsibility. (Applause).

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## MR. JADHAV

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I have to thank you, Sir, for giving me an opportunity to address this Conference this morning. Had I been serving on the principal Committee which is going to be formed at the end of this session I should not trouble you to give me a few minutes; but, not being attached as a tail to any group, I was left in the lurch and had to claim justice at your hands.

I represent here the southern portion of the Bombay Presidency non-Brahmins. They number about ten millions. I am also an accredited representative of the great Maharatta community. The Maharatta community is well-known for its past history, and its military prowess was exhibited as lately as the last war. I need not take up much of the time of the Conference in detailing the facts concerning or describing the achievements of my race; suffice it to say that word for word the description given by my gallant friend from the Punjab, the Raja of Domeli, will apply to the race to which I have the honour to belong.

The Maharattas, as is well-known, have been loyal and have kept themselves aloof from the agitation of the Congress. In the non-co-operation agitation of 1921 they kept themselves apart and did not participate to any extent in the troubles that were caused by it. In order to show their loyalty to the House of Windsor they mustered about 25,000 strong in the city of Poona to welcome His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, largely as a result of the exertions of two Maharatta Princes.



They gave a direct challenge to the success of the non-co-operation movement at that time, but times have changed and minds have changed. During the space of eight or nine short years there has been a great change in the mentality of the Maharatta people, and the second adventure of Mahatma Gandhi has met with a good deal of success. The Maharatta peasantry has fallen under the spell of non-co-operation, as is evidenced by the big gatherings of 10,000, 15,000, 20,000, and sometimes even 30,000 people who go out into the forests to commit what is technically called forest sadhana. As the responsible Minister in charge of the forests of the Bombay Presidency, I have from day to day to hear and scan reports and to see what goes on in the Presidency, and I was really surprised to see that the imagination of the people had been touched to such an extent by the teachings of that wiry and small bannia who was despised a few years before.

What is the secret of Mahatma Gandhi's success? He has awakened the sense of self-respect among the people, and everywhere now the cry is "We must be masters in our own house." That is a very great achievement indeed, but at the same time let me assure you that, as every one of my Indian friends knows the whole Indian nation is thoroughly loyal to the Throne. Although we all—Hindus and Mussulmans and whatever we may be—want to be masters in our own house, there is no thought of disloyalty. We do not want to separate from the British Empire; we want to live within it, and even in these days of unrest if any member of the Royal family will come to India I am quite sure that not only the Mussulmans but the Maharattas and other Hindus from every province will show their loyalty and their love

for the Empire, under which they have enjoyed so many benefits.

We are generally a law-abiding people, and although during these forest Sadhanas some little damage is done, it is done not with any object of private gain or private profit, but simply to assert that the people are protesting against a system which is grinding them down.

The Government of Bombay have recognised these aspirations of the people. They could not support the recommendations made by the Simon Commission—and who in India has accepted those recommendations? They have been looked upon as very reactionary, and many people have even refused to look at them. The Government of Bombay have in their despatch, shown what should be the future constitution of India, and in this I am very glad to say the Government have recognised that India should be given some amount of self-respect by bestowing upon her the power to have a little mastery in her own house. The government have recommended certain reservations and certain safeguards, but responsibility in the centre has been advocated, and that I bring to the notice of this Conference, for it is a very important thing. A number of people say there should be provincial autonomy only, and that there need not be any advance at the centre. Provincial autonomy, as it is called, is our due. We have worked the Montagu-Chelmsford system and the dyarchic system, and I may assure this Conference that the responsible Ministers who took part in its administration will not look at dyarchy again. Dyarchy has been condemned and complete Provincial autonomy must be given at this time or else the system will not work. Much has been said about the preservation of Law and Order. I do not myself see any difficulty there. The Hindus and the Moslems do form

people. We have lived together in perfect confidence one with another and in amity. In the Bombay Council my friends and the Mussalmans have worked together with Party at one mind. I am quite sure that, when Provincial autonomy comes, if Sir Ghulam Hussein Hidayatulla were authorized Minister in charge of law and order, no Hindu would make or entertain any fear. With pardonable pride, I may ever say, Sir, that if I am put in charge, if I am called upon to bear the burden of high office, my Mohammadans to be their friends will always trust me. So the amity between Hindus and Mohammadans I am quite sure of.

Difficulties in our domestic affairs can be settled. We have settled them before, and we shall settle them now. In the Army Hindu-Mohammadan questions never arise. In the fighting shoulder to shoulder the Hindu is proud to be a Mohammadan and the Mohammadan to be a Hindu. When a regiment contains some Hindu and some Mohammadans in companies, the Hindus take part in Moslem festivals. When the Mohammadans join the Hindus in their sorrows and share in their joys.

I should like to say a few words about the new India which is taking shape. The youths of the country are taking the movement in their own hands. People looking at the surface only may think that their activities are only political, but that is not true. The younger generation is realizing that for the sake of the unity of India differences of caste and creed and race ought to disappear. Whatever differences there may be between the older people, I am quite sure that their children will come together as friends and brothers. The next generation is going to be somewhat quite different.

I have to say something also about the Army, but as time is limited I need not say much. A few weeks ago

I had a talk with a British General and discussed with him the scheme which is at present being given as a sop to the Indians. The General agreed with me that the present scheme was not satisfactory. He said that under that scheme Indian Officers would get hardly any training in responsibility. I asked him what he would recommend, and he said that it would be much better if young officers were made lieutenants in some of the Indian regiments, and then these young officers from Sandhurst and military colleges could be put under them. Then it would be easy for them to get military knowledge and to imbibe traditions more quickly than under the present system.

I was very agreeably surprised to hear from the speeches of the Princes that they are eager to come within the Federation. I had not expected that, that time would come so quickly. I had expected that, for a time at all events, the Indian Princes would like to form their own confederation and then to come into the general scheme after some years of experience. If they are already eager to join the general Federation I would not like to stand in their way, although I think that perhaps it would be better for the Indian Princes to develop their own Indian Chamber of Princes, to form a federation of their own, to take up certain problems in which the Rajas and Maharajas are interested and in this way build up a tradition of their own while allowing British India to develop along its own lines. The development of British India has been all along on the lines of unity of Government. Evolution is doing its part, and when the provinces are properly developed there will be a time—I think a very short time—within which British India and Indian India will be united. We shall then be able to show that the spirit of amity and friendship that

has pervaded this Conference has secure foundations, that India is an indivisible whole and is determined to be a Nation, determined to take her rightful place among the other nations.

## COLONEL HAKSAR

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Sir, yesterday you expressed the hope that we should be able to finish our proceedings to-day by noon. It is now twenty minutes past eleven, you have still got to sum up, and you must have much more time to sum up—and are entitled to have it—than any member of any delegation. I must not encroach on your time and I shall try not to do so. This conference if it has not already formally done so, will appoint a Committee to consider and recommend the principles on which the future Government of India should rest. That Committee will report and this conference will examine the suitability of its recommendations. For this reason any expression of views at this stage as to how the future should be ordered appears to me to prejudice the issue or to be at best superfluous. Yet by the will of this Conference, the opportunity for a general discussion has been extended from day to day and from hour to hour. I take it Sir, that the object of the general discussion is to bring about a comprehensive attitude of mind in this Conference—an attitude of mind which will result from every member of this Conference becoming acquainted with the different points of view, to the end that the final conclusions of this Conference may be in cognisance with the general wish and related to the powerful factors which constitute the complex problem with which India and England are to-day confronted.

May I, with your permission, trace for a moment the genesis of this Conference to a point of time anterior to Sir John Simon's recommendation, and concurrently express

may not be so. I believe that it is so to a considerable extent on account of the relative position of the Englishman and the Indian in India. Whether that position has existed by design or in consequence of the Government of India, or in spite of it, is not the point. That it has existed is a fact. Let every Englishman search his heart and find an answer to the question how he would feel if the position were reversed—if in his home in England his position became something like what the position of the Indian is in his own home.

But whether fundamentally the problem is a racial problem or not, is it not in a deeper sense a human problem? I do not think it is any matter for wonder that every Indian—Prince or peasant—should, in consequence of the conditions which have prevailed for certainly a period of 60 years counting back to 1870, should feel, and strongly feel, that he might be saved from his friends. I submit, therefore, that the problem of India may be viewed as a problem of human nature, and let no doctrinaire considerations obscure the view.

I promised to explain how the present position in India is due to the Reforms of 1919. I do not propose to review the legislation of the last ten years to illustrate how that legislation has adversely affected the rights of the States in many ways, or how it has given rise to the feeling in British India that measures can be carried which the country feels are opposed to its interests. I shall choose only one example. Take the fixation of the exchange ratio at 1/6. It was a measure which was carried, I need not recall the well known circumstances in which it was carried. It was a measure which affected British India and the States alike. India may well wonder how a measure to which there was such strong and large

opposition could be carried against the wishes of the country. In any case the States did not even have the opportunity of expressing in any proper sphere—and such a sphere does not even exist to-day—and join the chorus of disapproval against that measure. It may therefore be said to the credit of the Reforms of 1919 and the Government of India Act of that year that they have served the very useful purpose of enabling India, British India and the States, to determine what radical changes are necessary in her constitution for the safeguard of her vital interests. This one illustration alone should suffice to explain, firstly, British India's cry for the transfer of responsibility from the centre and secondly, the anxiety of the States that in matters which affect them and British India in common they should have an effective voice in the framing and execution of policies.

Surprise has been expressed in various quarters that the States have shown a readiness to federate with British India even though until the other day they always maintained that they and British India mutually should have no concern with each other. This surprise is to me truly amazing. Is the attitude of the States not the direct logical consequence of the Reforms of 1919 and the aftermath of those Reforms?

While on this point I should like to offer two further observations. The first is that the conditions in British India no longer, as I have said, constitute the problem of British India. They constitute as much the problem of the States as those of British India. The other is that if the States whole-heartedly support the demands of British India, if they desire to unite with British India in a federation which will rest upon their vital and fundamental rights being recognised, they do so not to gain any ex-



clusive advantage for themselves, but with the object of keeping the Empire whole and entire. They do so out of their loyalty to the King-Emperor. They are once again doing for England what they did in 1857, namely, coming to England's rescue. In just that lies the true inwardness of the attitude which the States are taking to-day. They are desirous of restoring peace and contentment to their unhappy country and of rehabilitating the honour of England in India. If the unitary form of government remains, I doubt very much if England will feel the confidence to concede to India all that India is asking. If the States come in, and there is a federal form of government, I am sure that that fact would inspire England with sufficient confidence to entrust to India the management of her own affairs.

What better can England ask of Providence than a united and contented India behind her to face with her all the risks of the future and to help her in solving her many domestic problems? A united India, I believe, has been the goal and the ideal of England in India, and the States have come along to make the realisation of that ideal possible. They are asking England to put the coping stone on the magnificent edifice which she has raised in India, and, indeed, by consenting to let the people of India manage the affairs of their country according to their genius, they are enabling England to win the blessings of the 320,000,000 men and women of India who according to their faith in Kismet actually believe that the day of their deliverance is now dawning.

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## MR. C. Y. CHINTAMANI

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Mr. Prime Minister: As a humble member of the Delegation from British India, and as almost the last speaker from among its ranks, I deem it my duty and privilege to express my profound and respectful appreciation of the valuable contribution which Their Highnesses the Ruling Princes have made to the success of these deliberations. In the future India—a united, greater India—the part which the Princes will have to play will be even more important than that which has already fallen to their lot; and, speaking as a Hindu with all the traditional reverence of my race for rulers, I express the confident hope that in them the federated India will find the best friends, philosophers and guides.

Next, I ask you permission to express my appreciation of the patient endurance and courtesy with which the members of the British Delegation have listened without a word of interruption to many an unpalatable truth which has been driven home to their minds by the speakers from my country. This spirit of discipline which is but one of the many traits of British character of which I am a profound admirer conveys to us its own lesson, and I trust I shall have the good fortune, as previous speakers have had, of being given an equally patient hearing for a few minutes.

I am not in the least disturbed by the speech of our ex-Secretary of State, Lord Peel. I read long years ago that the British Tory has a habit of being most vehement in his protestation just on the point of surrendering a hopelessly untenable position.

Sir, the accents of Lord Peel were mildness itself compared with the strident utterances of some of his colleagues in his party, and if I were he I should shudder to think of what reception would be accorded to him by the Churchills and the Beaverbrooks of the party. I hope, Sir, that history will repeat itself, and that the party of which Lord Peel is a shining ornament will not be slow to profit by the example of the greatest Tory Leader of the last century, Mr. Disraeli, and that just as he stole the garments of the Liberal Party and introduced the Reform Bill in 1847, so it will be Lord Peel's Party who, if the opportunity falls to them will not be slow to take advantage of the spade work that your party is now doing in order to confer upon India the gift of self-government.

Lord Peel, as the bearer of a great and historic name, may also profit by the example of his great-grandfather, who had no hesitation in giving the protection and repealing the Corn Laws, and that the great-grandson will have no hesitation in realising that to obstruct the political advance of India is to stand by a lost cause, and that he will be wise in his day if he will join your ranks and will help us in our advance.

But one word I shall permit myself to say with regard to his observations on commercial monopolies and the conditions by which industrial and commercial advance is guided. As he evidently thinks that there is no injustice or inequality operating against Indians, I desire with all respect to make a present to him of this book, the life of the greatest of India's great industrial captains, J N. Tata, by an Englishman F. R. Harris. If he goes through this book I am sure he will see from many illustrations, cited with a wealth of detail, that there is justification for the complaints which we utter.

At the commencement of our proceedings I was by no means sure whether Lord Reading had come to pray or to curse, and after listening to his speech of yesterday I am still left in doubt as to what attitude he is going to adopt when the stage comes for concrete proposals. But Sir, true to the definition of Liberalism, Lord Reading has not stood still during the days that have elapsed since his return from India. He confessed yesterday that he was responsible for a certain utterance in the Legislative Assembly some years ago, when it was sought to explain that responsible Government was different from and less than Dominion status, the latter of which was never promised to us. He made a confession yesterday which was gratifying to us, and I hope that, as he claimed to be an inheritor of the great traditions of liberalism, he will care more for the liberalism of the greatest of the liberals whom this or any other country has known, Mr. Gladstone, than for the liberalism of his colleague, Sir John Simon. Mr. Gladstone stated a proposition and enunciated a principle which I respectfully beg to bring to the notice of Lord Reading. He said :

It is one of the uniform and unfailing rules that guide human judgment, if not at the moment, yet of history, that when a long relation has existed between a nation of superior strength and one of inferior strength, and that relation has gone wrong, the responsibility for the guilt rests upon the strong rather than upon the weak.

Again, to this I invite his particular attention.

"I hold," said Mr. Gladstone, "that the capital agent in determining finally the question whether our power in India will be the will of the 240 millions of people who inhabit India. The question who shall have supreme rule in India is, by the laws of right an Indian question, and those laws of right are from day to day growing into laws of fact. Our title to be there depends on the first condition that our going there is profitable to the Indian nation, and on the second condition that we can make them see and understand it to be profitable."

This, Sir, should be the true principle and not the latter day imperialistic doctrine which seeks to use what are called coloured peoples as the foot stool upon which the colourless 'people might build their prosperity and rise to fame.

Sir, it is a great privilege and advantage that this historic conference has for its president no less a man than yourself, the first subject of the Crown, the holder of the greatest office in the British Empire. We Indians have many reasons to be grateful to you. Early in your public life you showed an interest in India and a concern for her welfare and progress, which led to your visit to my country and the subsequent publication of the book called "The Awakening of India." Your sympathy was so pronounced that the Indian National Congress invited you to fill the office of its President in the year 1911 and you expressed your readiness to accept that position but for domestic political circumstances which rendered it impossible for you to go. Three years later you showed, when the War broke out, that in you there was not the so-called professional politician, a soldier of fortune, but one who had the courage of conviction and was fearless of unpopularity. (Hear, hear.) Six years after that you made a gift to my country, a gift which I in particular value. Here is that gift. It is a constant friend of mine, because whenever I, in the exercise of my vocation as an Indian editor, feel induced to pay compliments to the Government of India, I find them in "The Government of India" by J. Ramsay MacDonald, in which there is plenty of ammunition with which to make attacks on that Government. In the Preface to your book I read :

India's needs cannot be met by an adjustment here and an adjustment there. They have to be viewed in their wide sweep.

In 1928, presiding at the British Commonwealth Labour Conference in London you said :

I hope that within a period of months rather than years there will be a new Dominion to the Commonwealth of our Nations, a Dominion of another race, a Dominion that will find self-respect as an equal within the British Commonwealth. I refer to India.

And your party, in 1929, on the eve of the election, said—and this is what your party is committed to :—

The Labour Party believes in the right of the Indian people to self-government and self-determination, and the policy of the Labour Government would be one of continuous co-operation with them with the one object of establishing India at the earliest possible moment, and by her consent, as an equal partner with the other members of the British Commonwealth of Nations.

Sir, I trust that this Conference, unique and unprecedented in many ways, will propose lasting friendship between our two great nations. It is no good following Lord Rosebery and writing efficiency on a clean slate. Efficiency of administration which does not lead to the contentment and happiness and prosperity of the people has no meaning and no reality. After nearly a century and a half of British bureaucratic rule in India illiteracy is still the badge of the tribe. There is poverty which a former Secretary of State, the Duke of Argyll, described as poverty worse than any that could be witnessed anywhere in Europe, and there is communal tension, there is incapacity for military defence. For all these things it is the British policy and the bureaucratic system of government which are responsible. No longer should the Government of India be maintained as what it has been called a despotism of despatch boxes tempered by occasional loss of keys. No longer should red tape be the king and sealing wax the ministers. The Government of India can be a reality in the interests of the people of India when that Government is carried on by the representatives of those

people and not by others who may claim to be father, mother, and God, all rolled into one, of the uneducated masses.

If this Conference does not lead to the fruition of India's most legitimate hopes and aspirations I shudder to think of the future. The present system of government stands discredited; there is definitely an end of peace in India on the basis of the present system. A system which can be maintained only by casting into goal two such noble beings as Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Malaviya is doomed. I hope statesmanship—which has been described as the foresight of commonsense—will recognise the wisdom of avoiding a crisis and of solving this problem in a friendly spirit. As in the city that has adopted me, Allahabad, the best city in India, the two sacred rivers, the Jumna and the Ganges, coalesce and flow as one stream, so too I hope the British and the Indians, each adding their contribution to the progress of humanity, will join in bringing about material prosperity and moral elevation for the benefit not only of themselves but of the entire human race.

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## THE RT. HON. RAMSAY MACDONALD

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Your Highnesses, Ladies and Gentlemen : It is now my task to conclude this part of our proceedings, and in doing so it is my duty to try and survey the field as it is at the present moment. Of course, the very first thing that enters into one's mind and remains in one's mind with growing strength is the simple objective fact that we are all here together. It has never happened before. This surely is a union of India sitting at the council table not only with the British Government but with the British Parliament—the British Parliament represented by members of the House of Lords, by members of the House of Commons, and by members of the Government in existence for the time being. Ah, my Indian friends! Those of you with a keen and lively imagination, when I wrote those things that were going to satisfy the heart of my well-armed friend Mr. Chintamani, did you ever imagine that this would have happened under those circumstances and in a brief space of time? Do remember this, that the first thing you have to do regarding this Conference is to assure yourselves that we have reached a milestone that indicates a different future from what the past has been. (Applause.)

I said to you when you elected me to this Chair at the beginning that you were doing me a very great honour. The sense of that honour has grown from hour to hour and from day to day. This is not only an historic conference in the sense in which I have used the word, but it is historic in other senses that ought to put pride into the





in this sense, that every new fact brought before us challenges us to accommodate it in the practical systems which I hope we are going to construct before we leave this table.

There has been a great influence on public opinion here by your speeches. Every time you spoke you have had effect. My friends opposite who belong to the minorities, and who feel, I dare say—not only say but feel—that they are minorities, I give you this word of cheer and this word of comfort: the case you have put up has not fallen on deaf ears (Applause).

Another observation I want to make is this. The speeches have not stated problems for the purpose of debate; we have gone past all that. We are not here to debate: we are here for action (Cheers). Every one of you who has been in politics—and I dare say some of you will be a little more in the centre before you depart from this life—will, I think, before you go from here have a new angle from which to consider politics, the sort of angle that my honourable friends by me and myself have had to occupy, the angle of the responsible man whose problem is to relate the “is” to the “is to be”, and to create in the “is”, from the vital strength that it gets from the “is to be” an evolution which will work itself out in accordance with the laws of evolution (Cheers). It is not for us here to be recorders of what happened in 1800. We are not the recorders of the past. We are the custodians of the future. The policies of 1800, pursued by us and by every other nation were pretty much the same. The policy of 1930 is to depend upon the situation which has been created by the passing of the years since then. That is the next important thing that we have to consider in our work.

I hear it sometimes said that, somehow or other, some group or other wishes to go back upon what has been said and what has been accepted by you as pledges between, say, 1917 and this moment. That is not true. The Government accepts everything that has been officially said. This Conference has been called because we accept it. This Conference at its meetings will have proof that we mean to carry it out.

We have to face—and again I think of speeches delivered from the section of the Conference immediately in front of me—we have to face practical requirements. I do not like that word difficulty, because when a man says he is in difficulties he always implies to some extent that he is overcome. But there are two types of mind and two classes of men who never can face difficulties with success. The first type and the first class is the man who, when he comes up against a difficulty, imagines either that it is not there at all or that he can jump over it without any trouble. The other type of man, who is equally ineffective, is the man who says "Oh! there is a difficulty, let us stop our pilgrimage. The road is blocked. It is not our home but we cannot go home. Let us pitch our camp in front of the difficulty." He is no good. Neither of those types is of any use.

The man of practical action, the type of man and the type of mind that is going to serve both India and this country with success and with honour and be a blessing to both is the type of man who says: "Yes, there is a difficulty. Come on, let's get over it." That is the spirit in which we approach the problems before us. We have precisely the same sort of problem which, although different in its content, very very different in its content, but the same type of problem, the same class of problem both in think-

ing and practical action which we had to face the other day at the Imperial Conference. 1926 made a great declaration. 1930 had put a content into that declaration. That is the position in which we are here at this present moment.

As one of the speakers this morning said, our friend in front, government is a government of men, and constitutions cannot be made to order. Constitutions are not made at firesides. May I—with due respect—as one who belongs to the same fraternity, who honours the fraternity, but knows its weakness—add that neither can constitutions be made in the editorial offices of newspapers. I include myself in that.

What we have to do, as men of knowledge, men of experience, men who have thought out problems, is to come and sit together full of the faith, as a preliminary necessity, that we can find our way through, and that when we have found our way through we shall feel proud of our action, and will see our action fructify in the peace and the happiness of our people.

What has emerged from this? I say first of all that status has emerged. We are here altogether—Princes, British Indians, Hindus, Mahommadans, the Minorities-grouped in their various sub-divisions, some with great grievances, some with less grievances, but yet, very considerable grievances—some like Burma whose case we shall have to consider before this Conference is finally wound up. Here we are altogether—my friend Sapru, myself, our friends over there, all at the same table, working at the same problem, listened to in the same way, enjoying the same freedom of expression, and taking to themselves, quite rightly, the full right of criticising, objecting, negotiating, bargaining and accepting finally, or rejecting. I repeat, that is a gain which is marked by the meeting of

this Conference. Let it be noted that it is not static, it is not for this time only. This has established a relationship of active co-operation between us in which your part is as conspicuous as ours.

A second thing is this. The speeches have been extraordinarily practical in their character. There is another word I do not like—that this subject shall be “reserved” and that subject shall be “reserved.” That seems to imply the idea that we are sitting here, bankers as it were, and that we are wishing to exercise a control merely in relation to ourselves and not in relation to you. The problem of the reserved subjects—and every speaker has said that that problem must be faced—is a problem of how things are to be fitted into the conditions which exist to-day, not to stabilise and ossify those conditions, but as practical men who know perfectly well that within six weeks of our agreement you will have to bear responsibilities for it and we will have to bear responsibilities for it. You will have to go and face public opinion in India. You will have to go and face agitation in India. You will have probably to go and face those black flags which bade you God speed, and may be displayed in order to give you India’s welcome. So shall we. So shall this country. All I say is this, that as practical men we must face those facts, and in the agreement we make give them a place. It is not reserved. It is not withholding. It is not withdrawing. It is this, it is an honest study as between responsible men and responsible men of the facts relating to the conditions in India and the facts relating to public opinion here for the time being.

We have to recognise the objective nature of our task, not merely its subjective nature.

This is another point. The declaration of the Princes has revolutionised the situation. (Hear, hear.) Supposing we had met here without the Princes, supposing the Princes had come and had said nothing, or supposing they had said, "We are here merely as spectators." What a different situation would have presented itself to us! The Princes saying what they have said have at once not only opened our vision, not only cheered our hearts, not only let us lift up our eyes and see a glowing horizon, but have simplified our duties. The Princes have given a most substantial contribution in opening up the way to a really united federated India. (Applause.)

The final point that I need mention in that connection is this. We have made a great contribution here, you have made a great contribution, to the style of architecture. I had an Indian illustration in my mind. I do not think I will give it. You know, I have wandered up and down India, I have seen your beautiful old architecture. Under its walls, and standing in its shadows, I have tried to pour out my Western prejudices, shall I call them—not exactly, because I do not think they are exactly prejudices, but my Western upbringing—and I have been able to revel in that extraordinary blossoming of the artistic Indian mind. Style of architecture, my friends—remember this—has a great controlling influence on the mind that abides with it. Give us a constitution which is crude in its construction, and it will not help you. Give us a constitution which is in accordance with experience, which has become part and parcel of your spiritual thoughts, and that will help you. And the contribution I make to the style of the architecture of your constitution is this. The most characteristic foundation of our common Aryan civilization, of our common Aryan

social order, is the family. The family, as the Begum said yesterday, united in the village, the village united in the district and so on—India a federation, a federation which is flexible, a federation which meets the historical inheritance you have all got, in so far as it is worthy to be carried into the future, a federation which enables mergings to take place, a federation which embodies in itself the authority of the State and the liberty of the individual. The superiority of the combination and homage at the same time to the containing smaller co-ordinating groups within the federation, that is in accordance, I think, both with the *Indian genius* and the *British genius*, because as a matter of fact in our fundamentals we drink at the same historical fountains and are refreshed by the same historical reminiscences.

With regard to the practical points, I have a series, here which I have taken down. They are not systematic; please do not criticise them as that; they are casual. I took them down from the speeches as they were being delivered not by any of us but by you. What will be the nature of the component units which are to be fitted into a scheme of federation? What will be the nature of the central co-ordinating structure? What will be the relations of this structure to the provinces? What will be the relations of it to the States? What provisions will be made to secure the willing co-operation of the minorities and the special interests? What will be the subjects with which the general structure will deal, and in general what should be its powers, functions and responsibilities?

My friends, good debating speeches are not going to carry us over those problems and provide an answer to them (Cheers). I always delight in listening to my

very nimble Indian friends when they are in debate, and I must confess to a sin on my own part ; I love to take part in them. But that is not for here and now. Your problem and my problem is to sit down together and supply practical answers to those questions, which can be embodied in an Act of Parliament. (Applause).

This constitution, this federation or whatever it may be, must meet two fundamental requirements. In the first place, it must work. There is no good producing a constitution which will not work. That will not get you out of your difficulties and will not get us out of ours. The other point is this : The constitution must evolve. You are not in a position here to produce a static constitution that your grandsons and your great-grandsons and great-great grandsons will worship as though it was one of your sacred inheritances. Therefore, the constitution must work and the constitution must evolve. It must be a continuing thing, and in the evolving Indian opinion and Indian experience must be the more important initiating power.

That is the history, as a matter of fact, of all the constitutions of our Dominions. In saying what I have said I am not asking you to take up any special position at all. Look at the history of our evolving Dominions and you will find that they had ardent men in the days of the evolution, cursing, swearing, going to prison, boasting that they had been in prison. It all had to be gone through. These things, although we may say it in our rashness and our thoughtlessness, are really not the acts of man. They are the things that are inevitable in relation to the great fundamental laws which govern the life and provide for the changes in the life of this world, and nobody knows it better than the great Hindu and Mohammadan philosophers. You have to apply this to our procedure.



We are not hard headed business men always counting material gains. No, the politician is different from that. The politician has to have his spiritual draughts in order to enable him to be practical in his political proposals. I want you to remember that in your negotiations, and I hope we will still more

That is all I need say. Final words will have to be reserved for final meetings. Between final meetings and this is the honest laborious thinking, considering and pondering of the problems in front of us. Leaving the Chair as I shall now proceed to do to day I only leave it so that somebody else may go into some other chair, and this plenary Conference may resolve into committees. All I can say of that is that in the work of those committees you have the best will, not only of His Majesty's Government but of the British Parliament, House of Lords and House of Commons together. We shall wait with expectation—a little bit anxious perhaps, as I am sure you will be—with perhaps a little anxiety but all the same with expectation and in the hope that as a result of the work of those committees we shall be able in our final meetings to register agreement which will send you back to India happy men, powerful men, men able to face your difficulties, and which will give us a chance of doing the same thing here, and which above all will enable both of us to go our various ways with the friendship which unites us strengthened and the desire to co operate which is still with us amplified enormously beyond what it is at the present moment.

I must apologise to you. I meant to knock at the end of ten minutes. You will accept my apology, for what I hope I may say, is my first failure to do my duty at this Conference. This is the finish, and I hope the good feeling we have had and the candid expression of views we have given, may be continued in the committees. Please be assured that at any of these Committees, whatever they are, if you wish it, I am at your disposal to help you.

## LAST PLENARY SESSION, 19TH JAN. 1931.

### MESSAGE TO HIS MAJESTY

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*At the last Plenary Session of the Round Table Conference, on January 19, 1931 Mr. MacDonald read a message to the King, which ran as follows :*

The delegation to the Indian Round Table Conference at the conclusion of its proceedings desire to submit to His Majesty with their humble duty, the expression of their loyal gratitude for several marks of Royal favour so graciously bestowed on them. Through His Majesty's kindly forethought they owe the setting of their deliberations unsurpassed alike in convenience and beauty and they will ever treasure in grateful remembrance the inspiration of His Majesty's personal association with their proceedings. (Cheers).

## THE MAHARAJA OF PATIALA

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The Maharaja of Patiala, expressed his pleasure that many doubts and difficulties with which they had been confronted at the start had been cleared away. He regretted that communal and minorities problems still remained, but it was encouraging to notice that these difficulties did not hinder unity of British Indian demand for political advance. He was of opinion that the main outlines of the future structure of the constitution of India had been laid down on the lines, which it would be difficult to challenge. The main principle of federation had been accepted and he hoped that a large proportion of States would come in immediately, but they all had made it clear that they could federate only with a self governing British India and just as they did not desire to dominate British India so also they could not consent to British India dominating them. They wished to enter the federation as equal partners in a great and honourable enterprise.

"If our work at the Conference is not to go for nought, it is necessary that Great Britain should declare her intentions, without any further delay. We join in asking that our country should acquire that status within the Empire, which can alone satisfy her." He pointed out that though the Princes would be the first to suffer from chaos and anarchy yet they joined in urging the necessity of courageous, generous and prompt political advance and if they recommended the acceptance of the present scheme need any one in Britain hesitate?"

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## MRS. SUBBAROYAN

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Mrs. Subbaroyan, on behalf of the women's delegation, expressed appreciation of the work of the sub-committees. Their reports gave food for hope, but they were only provisional and judgment must be reserved. She did not believe that India would accept a form of government, which, while conceding the general principles of responsible self-government, contained details and reservations, which might make it really something different. But she believed that if the filling in of the picture could be approached in a spirit of goodwill that had been apparent at the Conference, the hopes now entertained would not be disappointed. She expressed the thanks of her colleagues and herself for the sympathetic hearing given to the proposals on behalf of the women. She hoped that the political status of women would not be forgotten at the future conferences and thanked Mr. Benn and Lord Irwin for recognising the principle by including women in the Conference.

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## LORD PEEL

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Lord Peel said that the discussions at the Conference were most valuable in informing and shaping the public opinion here and probably in India. The most outstanding fact of the Conference had been that the conception of Federal India had been brought from the realm of dreams to the state of reality. He paid a tribute to the enlightened action of the Princes and those leaders of opinion in British India who had given their political aspirations the Federal colour and said that it would be a great misfortune if this mighty scheme could not be started soon on its great career.

Explaining briefly the attitude of the Conservative section [of the British delegation, Lord Peel said: "Our aim has been to sketch the main outlines of the constitution at once so flexible as to meet differences of federal unity and so firm as to create a strong cement of unity in the centre for the manifold diversities of Indian social and political life. We have done our best to free our minds from all old unitary adherences and shaped the new structure as far as possible on purely federal lines."

Lord Peel said they had tried not to look with suspicion on any new proposals, merely because it was not embedded in some older constitutional system. They had not thought that British Parliamentary methods should be transferred wholesale from Westminster to Delhi. They were anxious that the Central Legislature should be so composed that the tie with the Provinces should be firmly impressed on the constitution and that, while making a law

for All-India they were acting as agents and interpreters of the Provinces and the States.

They favoured immediate self-government for the Provinces so that the view of Responsible Ministers should be added to those present at the Conference in approving or modifying the new constitution. They were keenly interested in India's political aspirations and in discussing the constitutional safeguards they had in mind the necessity of the carrying out of Imperial responsibilities and they were not moved by any desire to fetter Indian freedom.

Lord Peel said it was generally admitted that certain subjects must be reserved to the Crown and that certain reserve powers must remain with the Viceroy. He pointed out the diversity of opinion with regard to these safeguards and emphasised that there must be no haziness in regard to them. It was imperative that while safeguards were necessary, the machinery for operating them should be closely and clearly defined. It was in the interests of general confidence that the protection for minorities should be closely and clearly defined. It was in the interests of general confidence that protection for minorities should be clearly set forth and as regards financial security, he was expressing no distrust of Indian ministers in saying that, for the present it would assist them if financial safeguards were so drawn up as to give confidence to the great commercial and financial community. Again, in transferring power British Government could not be indifferent to the interests of those who had trusted her for protection and security.

Lord Peel said he had heard with surprise that reservations were made in some quarters to complete equality of treatment of British traders and British trade.

"I must make it clear that our future attitude will depend

upon such equality. I shall be obliged to withdraw what I am about to say now unless that condition is fulfilled. It must not be assumed in any way that we consider that these constitutional difficulties and requirements are incapable of solution. If safeguards can be made effective with care and goodwill and if our practical problems can be met in a workmanlike spirit, as I believe they can, then we shall not hesitate to assent to the new constitution because it will involve the transfer of new powers and responsibilities to India. (Applause).

"It is agreed that opinion neither here nor in India is to be presented at this Conference with a scheme that must be accepted as a whole or rejected. Many problems are still left over and all we ask is that these problems should be squarely faced and fairly settled."

Referring to the communal question, Lord Peel said that long patience must be shown before a settlement could be reached and it was manifest that, unless a satisfactory agreement was concluded, the success of any future constitution must be gravely jeopardised. Again the just claims of the Depressed Classes, Anglo-Indians and other minorities must be satisfied.

Lord Peel concluded by emphasising the Conservatives' desire that the Conference's labours should bring peace, security and goodwill to India. "I trust that, in the coming months, the seals may be affixed to this new deed of partnership between two countries. May the leaders of India freed from the fevers of non-co-operation, bend all their energies to the furtherance of their great and constructive task."

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## LORD READING

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Lord Reading said that, when those who participated in the Conference looked back on the results attained, they would be gratified that so large a measure of agreement had been reached upon important questions and that opinion had been exchanged upon others which would be further examined by competent expert authorities and would be decided after due submission to British and Indian opinion.

“When we first met the outlook was confused and the problems seemed baffling, even insoluble, especially within the limited time at our disposal. Examination and discussion, attended by goodwill and conducted throughout with great courtesy and in a calm and restrained atmosphere, under the wise guidance of the Prime Minister and the Lord Chancellor, have overcome formidable obstacles and enabled us to bring the session of the Conference to a conclusion. At the outset none could have expected that success to the extent already described would attend our efforts or that we should have attained a substantial measure of agreement on the main groundplan. The Princes of India, to their honour be it recorded, led the advance and cleared the new way for constitutional development. Whatever may be the fate of our endeavours at this Conference the attitude of the Princes will always be gratefully remembered by those who desire a union of all that stands for India.”

Lord Reading pointed out that the Princes, however, attached conditions to perhaps the most important question of responsibility at the centre. He quoted in this connec-



tion from the important speeches of Bikaner and Bhopal and again from the last day's speech of Patiala. Lord Reading added: "The Conference whole-heartedly welcomed the idea of an All-India Federation. We therefore devoted our attention, energies and abilities to laying the foundation of the new edifice. The work of construction must proceed and, we most sincerely hope, to completion. From the moment the Conference decided to proceed upon the basis of Federation the whole aspect changed. The idea of Federation which had appealed so strongly to Sir John Simon and to the Statutory Commission and later to the Government of India and that had seemed entirely beyond realisation, sprang into being at the Conference and threw a rosier hue over the constitutional problems."

Lord Reading, continuing, said:

"Once the All-India proposal was accepted we, as a delegation, studied the problem afresh and from an entirely new angle. A Federation could not proceed unless the principle of responsibility at the Centre was accepted. Without it, the Princes would not move towards a Federation. We wished, as members of the Liberal Delegation and true to its traditions, to travel in the direction of responsibility, but we felt it necessary to stipulate that certain safeguards and reservations should be introduced and these have been explained and discussed. We expressed in plain language our definite support to the policy of conferring responsibility at the Centre provided that the safeguards were adequate and the new constitution was workable."

"Throughout the debates we have listened most attentively but have seen no reason to change our attitude. We hold to the statements I made in their entirety. These opinions were not, as some suggested, the result of impulse-



## THE GAEKWAR OF BARODA

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The Gaekwar of Baroda said that, for himself, the idea of a Federation had been present for very many years, and it had impressed him as presenting the only feasible means of securing the unity of India. He was content to believe that, in the present circumstances, realisation was at hand of the ideal he had long cherished. He described the Conference's conception of a United India, as unity without uniformity, which was the prime requisite of true federation. It was his deliberate conviction that to strain after uniformity in the Federal Structure, would be a mistaken policy. Each unit should be perfectly free to develop along its own peculiar lines. The success of the Conference's labours should be judged by only one test. Have they resulted in producing a Government capable of facing the tremendously difficult problems boldly and of adopting wise measures and policies which would enable India to take her place among the advanced countries of the world? If future Government was to be "of the people for the people by the people," then the provinces, as at present constituted, seemed too large for the end in view. The education of the people should be made an earnest endeavour and, the greatest efforts should therefore be concentrated on the uplift of the people by this means.

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## MR. ZAFARULLAH KHAN

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Mr. Zafarullah Khan declared that the most hostile and adverse critic of the work of the Conference would not deny that a great deal had been accomplished. They had traced out the ground plan, dug out, excavated and filled in the foundations, and even raised the walls of a vast constitutional structure to a certain height, but from one viewpoint it appeared to be rather a lopsided structure. He regretted that very little had been done to establish the absolute autonomy of the provinces in the same way as the States entering the Federation would be autonomous. He earnestly hoped that the autonomous position of the provinces would be very much more clearly emphasised. He was glad to find that one of the still necessary key-stones would be supplied by an agreement, securing the rights and interests of the British commercial community. He hoped that the structure would not for too long be left standing in an incomplete condition.

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Mr. A. Ramaswami Mudaliar expressed British India's deep gratitude to the Princes for the part they had played in fostering the idea of a Federation. Nobody who had heard them at the Conference could have the smallest doubt of the great part they would take in the future Government of the country and the future of the nation. He did not wish to be regarded as speaking disparagingly of the generation whose political career might soon end, but he ventured to express the feeling of the younger generation that it was they who perhaps would have the burden of working the constitution in the coming decades. He had witnessed at this Conference, that change of heart for which his countrymen had been pleading for many generations. He had seen a change of heart in the British delegation. He had heard Lord Reading's great speeches. "How can I go back to my country, unless I am able to tell them with confidence and sincerity that we had witnessed that great change of heart? After hearing Lord Peel he had seen it too in the Conservatives. The last two decades had seen many world changes, but through it all one golden purpose was visible, and there had been an effort to bring different units of the British Empire together. He had heard a great deal of talk of the "Lost Dominion." But, the spirit generated at this Conference had not lost India for Britain, but had reconquered it; and if this temper and change of heart was seen as clearly by Indians as had been seen at this Conference—and he had no doubt that they would see it in the coming months—he gave an assurance that this new reconquered India would be a firm collaborator in the British Empire.

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## SIR TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU

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When in October last we left the shore of our country we were told by friends and opponents, by men of our own party and by men of other parties, that we were going on a fool's errand, that we were incurring risks of an extraordinary character, that England had made up its mind against us, that we should reach a hostile England. Well, I do not know whether we came here in the midst of a hostile England, but I do know one thing, and I hope I am not putting it too high when I venture to say that we are leaving behind us a friendly England (Cheers.)—an England which has sent to this historic Conference some of her greatest, wisest and most farseeing statesmen, to talk to us on terms of equality, to discuss questions of high import in a spirit of give and take and not to dictate to us from their side. That has been my experience and I venture to think that, so far as that is concerned, I give expression to the views of many of us at this Conference.

Sir Phiroze Sethna : "All of us."

Dr. Sapru : Indeed, as I have been corrected, of all of us. (Cheers.)

Now during the last nine weeks, what is it that we have witnessed emerging from this great Conference? Three Central ideas have emerged—one the higher, nobler and loftier idea of All-India Federation which has taken such material shape, if I may say so, mainly because of the patriotic attitude of the Indian Princes. (Applause).

The second important idea which, from the viewpoint of British India, is of the highest importance, is the

idea of responsibility at the centre. Lord Reading, in his remarkable speech, this morning, quoted from the speeches of Bikaner and Bhopal to show how, so far as the Princes are concerned, the only condition, the only term, on which they would come into the federation was that responsible Government should be established. We responded to that call in the spirit in which their Highnesses expressed their wishes. We did so not merely because we think it benefits them but also because we think it benefits us.

The third important idea which has emerged, and which, if I may respectfully say so, is the integral idea of all systems of responsible Government is that India must be prepared in the years to come to defend herself. For years past, for 40 or 50 years past, it has been a sore point with us that we have not been admitted into the highest ranks of the Army. It is only during the last ten years that a few of our young men have had the King's Commission conferred on them, but there is no Indian to whatever school of thought he may belong, who has not felt keenly on this question and who has not urged it on the Government from time to time that a serious attempt should be made to qualify the men of India to take the burden of defence on their own shoulders. We know, and we have known it with great regret, that even the recommendation of the Skeen Committee as regards the establishment of an Indian Sandhurst has not found much support in certain official quarters in England.

To-day that principle is no longer open to discussion. It has been conceded. It has been acknowledged that we are entitled to have an Indian Sandhurst, that it must be established to qualify Indians ultimately to take responsibility for the defence of their own country. I consider it no small gain. It may be that there are certain safe-

guards. Frankly, I am not alarmed by those safeguards. They are really intended in the interests of the responsible Government that we are establishing at the centre (Cheers) and not to strengthen the hands of English control over us. That is the view I take.

It is dangerous to indulge in prophecies, especially in the field of politics. It would be dangerous for me to say that the enthusiasm with which some of us have approached the whole of this scheme here will be readily shared by everyone in India. I am fully prepared for a great many doubts and for a good deal of scepticism in certain quarters but, Mr. Prime Minister, may I appeal to your great political experience? Has there been a single constitution established in any one of the Dominions which has not been taken exception to whether in Ireland, Australia or South Africa by a certain number of people?

And indeed when we remember that on the present occasion we are marching towards a Federation (an idea with which we have not been familiar) I should not be surprised if certain doubts are expressed and certain amount of scepticism shown. But of one thing I feel sure that when the ideas which have been evolved here are carefully examined, when time is given to the people to think about them, you will find that those doubts, those misgivings and that spirit of scepticism will disappear as your London fog disappears sometimes and that we shall then enter into the bright sunshine of hopefulness for future.

Mr. Prime Minister, I have seen to-day remarkable evidence of that spirit of hopefulness. Lord Peel is not here and I am glad he is not here, for otherwise his presence would have been embarrassing to me, but I would venture to say, that I have already witnessed a remarkable



change in the attitude of that great party which he represents, during the last eight days and, may I very respectfully ask you, Sir Samuel Hoare to accept my congratulations and convey the same to your distinguished colleague for the remarkable speech which he delivered this morning, a speech which was full of hope so far as your party was concerned.

Well, Mr. Prime Minister, may I venture to make an appeal to you? You know far better than any one knows or has known during the last four months of our discussion what the condition of India is and has been.

And, speaking with a full sense of responsibility and with full appreciation of the administrative situation in India I make an earnest appeal to you to make it possible for the people of India at the present moment to apply their minds to a consideration of these problems dispassionately, not in the spirit of irritation and bitterness, but in a spirit of hopefulness.

While I am making this appeal to you, I think it my clear duty that I should make a similar appeal to my countrymen. Too long has this struggle gone on. The amount of bitterness already generated is far too great and I want revered leaders, men who command the homage, respect and affection of their countrymen and enthusiastic young men, to apply their minds seriously to a consideration of these problems and make their further contribution to a further elucidation of our ideas and further improvement of this scheme, for I recognise that it is one of the merits of Lord Sankey's scheme that it does not bolt the door against further suggestion.

Therefore, Mr. Prime Minister, I venture to express the hope that when you make your declaration, you will not merely utter the word of hope to us, but you will, with

all the weight of your position, take courage in your hands and hold out the olive branch to my country. I respectfully ask you for the release of political prisoners, for amnesty to those who have gone to jail for an opinion from which you have differed and from which many of us have differed and which we consider to be deplorable. Let a new era be established and let the struggle of this last few months be forgotten. Let the people approach the new task which awaits them in a spirit of generous appreciation and in a spirit of hope and good cheer.

Mr. Prime Minister, I am sure that in asking for the release of the prisoners, I am giving expression to the views not only of those who are here but of a very large number of men of my country who are eagerly expecting some such gesture from you. (Applause.) I will only utter one word more and then sit down. Whatever may be the verdict of our critics, either in the Press here or in the Press in India, whatever may be the verdict of my countrymen and your countrymen upon the work of the Conference there is one thing in regard to which every one of us is united without exception and that is the fine spirit which has been shown, not merely by His Majesty's Government but by the entire section of the British delegation in discussing these things with us. Our deep sense of obligation is due to you, Sir, and to every one of your colleagues and, if I may venture to mention one single name, I will say that such measure of success as has been achieved by the Federal Structure Sub-Committee, which was entrusted with the very heavy responsibility, has to very large extent, indeed to a much larger extent than we imagine, been due to the wisdom, statesmanship and breadth of view of the Lord Chancellor.

## THE MAHARAJA OF ALWAR

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The principal scheme that has been before us has been the evolving of a system which is ultimately going to lead to that happy consummation which I would like to describe as the 'United States of India' within the Empire. In order to achieve this ideal, we have worked on this scheme of federation under which term come all the other points that we have been discussing during these last few months. Lord Sankey originally made up twelve points for our consideration, and I am glad that they have escaped the fateful number of fourteen pronounced by the late Mr. Wilson of America, and have brought us to grips with the actual situation of the future. The component elements of the federation, the type of Federal Legislature, its powers, the number of members, the methods whereby representatives from British India and from Indian States are to be selected, the constitution, character and powers of the Executive, the powers of Provincial Legislatures, the constitution, character, powers and responsibility of the Provincial Executives, the provision for minorities, the problem of establishing a Supreme Court, the defence force and the relation of federal and provincial executives to the Crown, have been the twelve items round which we have centred our deliberations.

The Federation that we have been attempting to devise is one of a unique character for the reason that we are bringing two Indias together into political unity, where each will work out its individual domestic and internal problems and each will combine together for the good of India as a whole. This Federation scheme, which in the

Simon Report and Government of India Despatch was looked upon as a remote contingency, has become an actual reality. And why? Because the British and Indian States have come determined to join hands in order to make this scheme a success. British India has made its valuable contribution to this scheme and I believe it is already realised that Indian States have played no small part for the sake of their country in making this scheme a workable proposition of the future. Whereas in other countries this Federation has come under easier circumstances, with comparative unity in races and creeds, with comparative unity in political organisations, these questions have been more complicated in regard to India, because we have to contend with so many different races as well as with the ancient system of rule laid down by our Raj Nitis, the exponents of which are Indian States. On our side of the table we have attempted to make a contribution of which I hope our fellow countrymen and others present in this room will not have reason to say that we in any way became a spoke in the wheel. On the other hand, we have had it stated by no less a personage than the Prime Minister of the present Government, by members of the British Delegation representing Conservatives and Liberals, that the attitude which Indian States took by coming into this Federation has caused a revolution in the situation. While we are not revolutionaries in the strict sense, we are glad that, for the sake of our country and its interests, we have contributed to this vast change in hope of its ultimate success. \* \* Its eventual realisation lies in appreciating two basic principles; firstly, one, on which we are all agreed, that we want India to aspire to the highest status possible within the British Empire itself, and secondly, and no less

fundamental, the principle that we must each be left free to go our own way in working out our internal problems of the provinces and the Centre or on the other side of the Indian States according to our best dictates and of our human capacities for the happiness and progress of the people destined to have been placed in the hands of our respective governments. For while the one cannot dictate to the other as to the best methods of Government for all, I think that it is not altogether an unfortunate factor (in fact I believe that it is for the common good) that we have two or more systems working out their proposition towards our one common aim inside the Federation. It is only by mutual understanding of our respective rights and privileges that we can, in unanimity and unity, work out our united goal. There will be tendencies for sparks to fly from one side to the other, and as none can afford to get themselves encased in watertight compartments, I am sure that under our two different systems (the ancient of the East, the other, the modern of the West) for the sake of our Motherland we can still arrive at our very laudable goal for the benefit of India.

The responsibility at the centre of the Government of India is a question on which a great part of the success of this Conference depends and a great part of the success of the future governance of the country and, while certain subjects have been reserved, we hope that the spirit will move and conceive ideals on all sides that will help towards the working out of satisfactory solutions in the shortest space of time.

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## SIR M. SHAFI

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Sir Mahomed Shafi, on behalf of his brethren of the British Indian delegation, expressed grateful acknowledgment of the far-sighted statesmanship and sympathetic co-operation, which Mr. MacDonald and the members of the Labour, Liberal and Conservative delegations had displayed throughout the Conference. Sir M. Shafi: envisaged the day when India would rise to the full stature of an equal partner in the British Commonwealth of Nations, as one of His Majesty's Dominions, not only to the incalculable happiness and contentment of its vast population, but also to the benefit and immense strength of the British Commonwealth itself. He declared that the Round Table Conference had brought England and India much closer together than they had ever been before. Sir Mahomed concluding, said, "May God grant that the new concord, which arises from to-day, will grow in sincerity and strength to the mutual benefit of the two countries and the incalculable good of humanity at large." (Cheers).

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## THE RT. HON. SASTRI

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The Rt. Hon. Sastri said that Mr. MacDonald had been a valiant soldier of peace. He declared, "On your breast my vision sees many prizes and medals in this pacific war, but if our work goes through and sees its consummation then you will have won the Victoria Cross of Peace." (Applause.) Only the first and hardest part of their task was over. There was a good deal to follow, scarcely less arduous on both sides of the water. When they went back to India this scheme must find champions willing to brave risks in spreading it all over the country. (Hear, hear). "No doubt among us here, who have helped to shape the constitution we must look for the best and most convinced champions, but on the other side too we must look for advocacy. We want the Princes, Chiefs and ruling powers to find among you too men somewhat made for this Indian Federation, who like Don Quixote, will do battle for it regardless of what may be said around them, who are prepared to risk everything—life, limb and wealth—in pursuit of this great ideal."

Mr. Sastri appealed to the Princes to convince the lesser Princes that the Federation would be in their interests.

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## BEGUM SHAH NAWAZ

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Begum Shah Nawaz declared that Mr. MacDonald's momentous and historic words so deeply touched her heart that words failed to express her feelings. Mr. MacDonald's name would not only be written in letters of gold but would go down to history as the name of one, who knew how to combine statesmanship with wisdom and friendship. "The great moment, for which we have waited so long has arrived and, thanks to you (Mr. MacDonald) the greatest friend of my country, we stand before the dawn of a new era, which will always be remembered for this wonderful achievement of having united England and India in an everlasting link of comradeship and friendship." (Cheers).

Begum Shaw Nawaz asked Mr. MacDonald to convey to Their Majesties, their best thanks for their generous messages, sympathetic interest and kind hospitality. The Begum thanked all the British Nation for their kind hospitality and sympathy and the warmth of their welcome.

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## MR. C. Y. CHINTAMANI

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Mr. Prime Minister : In one brief word I wish to join my colleagues in their respectful tributes to the Lord Chancellor for the great work which he has assisted in accomplishing. Proceeding to the Report before us I wish to state, again in a brief word, one feature that runs through it—namely, that the most important matters have been left as open questions. In paragraph after paragraph we come across the observation that the question requires further investigation or exploration, or that no member who expresses any opinion in the sub-Committee stood committed to that opinion or to any other. Therefore it remains still an open question what exactly will be many of the features of the future constitution, upon the soundness of which will depend not only its efficient and harmonious working but the degrees of satisfaction and contentment which it can bring to the people concerned.

Now, Sir, I confine myself to one particular point—namely, responsibility at the Centre—and here the Lord Chancellor and his colleagues of the Federal Structure Committee will pardon me for saying that I cannot express any sense of enthusiasm or unbounded satisfaction, but rather I feel bound to express my sense of disappointment at one or two features of the proposals.

In the first place, the reservations proposed are not only with regard to foreign affairs and the defence of the country, on which there has been no difference of opinion but with regard to questions of finance, questions of currency and exchange, with regard to which my opinion

and feeling are entirely different from those which informed the proposals made by the Marquess of Reading. Mr. Prime Minister, I hope recrimination is no part of my composition, but I shall be forgiven for saying that the manner in which Indian finance, currency, exchange and allied subjects have been managed by the present Government of India does not surely establish their claim to the reservation of power in such matters in the hands of the Viceroy in the future. If there is one matter on which Indian opinion has been most keen it is that India should be in a financial sense mistress of her own household. *That* this Report does not promise to India; and to that extent I anticipate that nationalist opinion—not only Congress opinion but nationalist opinion of a more moderate variety—will dissent from some of the conclusions come to here.

Next with regard to the responsibility of the Executive to the Legislature I am bound to express my feeling that, while in theory we shall have an executive removable by the Legislature, in practice it will be an irremovable Executive on almost all occasions. I can assure my friend Colonel Haksar that he need not include me among those whom he had in mind when he referred to constitutional purists. I realise only too well that all these are matters dealt with by imperfect men in an imperfect manner. But, Sir, if the imperfections so overshadow the good points and to obscure them, then I think we shall not be held guilty of purism if we express our dissatisfaction. The responsibility is to both Houses of the Legislature, composed in very large part of members nominated by the ruling Princes, and even that responsibility is further limited by the fact that it requires the vote of a two-thirds majority of a joint session of the two Houses for the removal of the ministry. I shall congratulate those who will be in

charge of no-confidence motions in the future legislature on the rare occasions when they may by Providence or similar intervention succeed in getting that two-thirds majority, I should like to know the self-governing country in the world where responsibility is expressed in this form. On this point, Mr. Prime Minister, I am bound to confess that I am dissatisfied with the report of the Federal Structure Committee and I do not contemplate that any section of Indian opinion will acquiesce in this.

Mr. Prime Minister, at this stage I do not want to take up the time of the Committee further; but I do not wish it to be understood that I sit down only with an expression of dissatisfaction. In order to avoid that impression I should like to say that I am impressed as much as any other member by the great work that has been done and I look forward with hope and confidence that in the near future this work may be consummated and India shall be a contented member of a Commonwealth of free nations.

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## UNDELIVERED SPEECHES

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In response to Mr. MacDonald's earlier appeal Dr. Ambedkar, Mr. Pannirselvam, Mr. H. P. Mody, Sir H. Carr, The Chief of Sangli, Sir Cowasji Jehangir, Sir Mirza Ismail, Sir Akbar Hydari, Sir Manubhai Mehta, Col. Haksar, the Raja of Parlakimedi, Raja Narendra Nath, Mr. Narendra Nath Law and Mr. Jadhav handed in their speeches, instead of delivering them.

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### DR. AMBEDKAR

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Dr. Ambedkar, however, was not sanguine that Lord Sankey's plant would grow. He expressed the fear that franchise on a limited basis would result in a government of the masses by the classes, but if the constitution for the *centre satisfied Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Mr. M. R. Jayakar and Sir A. P. Patro* he felt that it was not for him to oppose it.

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### MR. PANNIRSELVAM

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Mr. Pannirselvam on behalf of the Indian Christians expressed satisfaction at the conclusion of the various sub-committees and felt assured that the community would be prepared to make its own contribution to the new self-governing India.

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## MR. H. P. MODY

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Mr. Mody said that the Conference had achieved much but he felt disappointed that so many matters were left undetermined. He emphasised that India's main demand must remain unaffected by the fate of the principle of federalism. He added with reference to finance that India must have a complete financial and fiscal autonomy. He submitted that stability would be assured with the acceptance of legal and moral obligations respecting debts and with large powers vested in the Viceroy.

Mr. Narendranath Law associated himself with this view.

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## SIR HUBERT CARR

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Sir Hubert Carr felt that when the framework was filled in it would attract the support of the best elements in India. He emphasised the conditions on which the Europeans approved, namely, that the states should receive a strong proportion of representation, that the Crown should be adequately represented in the legislature—this representation to be reduced as the transitional period expired—and that the executive should hold office during the life of parliament unless defeated by a two-thirds vote or dismissed by the Governor-General.

Sir Hubert Carr emphasised the need for assuring the stability of the constitution and ensuring the protection of British commerce and said that the Europeans would only be able to overcome the natural hesitation accompanying a forward move if they were satisfied that the new constitution gave not only themselves but all the minorities complete confidence.

## SIR MIRZA ISMAIL

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Sir Mirza Ismail declared that the delegates were returning to India conscious that their duty was done and with the message of trust and goodwill from Britain. He pointed out that the communal negotiations had tended to accentuate a few of the points of difference and obscure many points of agreement. He did not doubt that a just settlement would be accepted by the mass of Indians of all communities. In any case the British Government must pursue the work to which they had so nobly set their hands. He concluded by saying that it was now for Indians to build on the solid foundations laid. If they failed history would not blame England but India.

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## SIR COWASJI JEHANGIR

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Sir Cowasji Jehangir hoped that the Government would ensure that there should be no break in the continuity of work and hoped that committees for this purpose would soon be appointed. He further expressed the hope that the services would be reassured by the Services Sub-Committee's report but he was not completely satisfied with the Franchise Committee's report.

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## THE CHIEF OF SANGLI

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The Chief of Sangli believed that the smaller states would be as ready as others to recognise the essential unity of India and participate in realising the federal ideal.

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## SIR AKBAR HYDARI

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Sir Akbar Hydari deprecated the emphasis laid on the points of disagreement and counselled giving attention to the brighter side of the picture. He believed that there was general agreement in favour of an all-India federation, with subjects definitely defined and with responsibility at the centre for those subjects and autonomy in the provinces, a stable federal legislature and definite and clear reservations and safeguards with the Crown for the maintenance of peace and tranquillity and financial stability and for the fulfilment of treaty obligations with the States. Sir Akbar Hydari expressed gratification that the scheme adopted was one which in essentials he had thought out as the best solution and that he was privileged to play his part, in its final acceptance.

Sir Akbar Hydari considered that a practical agreement on most essential points was no mean achievement by the Conference and said that there was plenty of time to adjust the differences while working out the details. He promised to do his best to induce the States, great and small, to accept the federal idea. He said that his friends from British India had a harder task but he believed that they would secure the adherence of all fairminded men if they concentrated on principles while working for the adjustment of differences. He hoped that in two or three months the work of the Conference would secure such support in India that it would be possible for the various expert committees to draft a detailed constitution on sound lines.

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Sir Manubhai Mehta pointed out that the Princes' support for Federalism was due to their attachment to the King-Emperor, their love for their own Motherland which had inspired the surrender of a part of their internal sovereignty to a federal government, their regard for the interests of their own subjects which had driven them to secure adequate safeguards for financial justice respecting the future fiscal arrangements and their own instinct of self-preservation. He pointed out that their internal sovereignty was being whittled down before the claims of Paramountcy and said that while the Princes were prepared for a diminution of some of their sovereignty in the interests of commonweal no needless sacrifice should be demanded.

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COL. HAKSAR

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Col. Haksar emphasised that the Conference had shown that Britain's policy was designed to secure harmony and agreement. He pointed out that it was far more to India's interest than Britain's that India's finance should be stable. He regarded safeguards as scaffolding and declared that in acquiring responsible government India also acquired Dominion Status.

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THE RAJA OF PARLAKIMEDI

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The Raja of Parlakimedi expressed his thanks to the Conference on behalf of the Oriyas and the zemindars of Madras. He emphasised the need for security for all, mentioning in this connection the services and foreign commerce.



## RAJA NARENDRA NATH

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Raja Narendra Nath declared that the main outline of the Constitution showed a material and substantial advance. He regretted that the minorities question had not been settled. He assured the Conference that the view he had taken in this regard was not due to class or communal or parochial interests but to the desire to construct the constitution on a scientific basis.

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## MR. JADHAV

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Mr. Jadhav considered that the constitution to be hammered out might be acceptable but it was the spirit which was really important. The spirit of Mr. Churchill would not make for peace. Conciliation was the only true remedy. He was gratified to see that the foremost British statesmen had realised the necessity of meeting the national demand. He urged adequate consideration of rural interests when the basis of suffrage was laid down.

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## KING'S REPLY TO MESSAGE

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*Mr. MacDonald then read the following reply from the King to the Conference's message :—*

I have received with much pleasure the loyal message which the Chairman of your Conference conveyed to me on your behalf. The time has now come for me to bid you God-speed on the conclusion of your deliberations which I inaugurated some nine weeks ago.

I have followed your proceedings with the closest interest, and have been impressed with the dignity and earnestness with which they were conducted and the unity of aim which inspired them... It was not to be expected that in nine short weeks, however close and intensive the labour that was crowded into them,—I know full well how exacting your labours have been—a clear-cut and final solution of the vast problems which confronted you should be found. But I am persuaded that, great as is the volume of patient thought, careful work is still to be done. You have opened a new chapter in the history of India. I am sure you will, one and all, strive to secure the aid of your countrymen in carrying on the task in the same spirit that has marked your discussions and I hopefully look forward to the outcome which will restore peace and contentment throughout India.

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### R. T. C. RESOLUTION

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*After the reading of the King's message and before adjourning for the last time, the Conference adopted a formal Resolution recording the progress achieved so far by Consultations between the various delegations and their Sub-Committees. The Resolution which was put by Mr. MacDonald and passed unanimously, ran as follows :*

These reports, provisional though they are together with the recorded notes attached to them afford, in the opinion of the Conference, material of the highest value for use in framing a constitution for India, embodying as they do, a substantial measure of the agreement on the main ground of the plan and many helpful indications of the points of detail to be further pursued and the Conference feels that arrangements should be made to pursue uninterruptedly the work, on which it has been engaged including provision in the constitution of adequate safe-guards for Mussalmans, Depressed Classes, Sikhs and all other important minorities.

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## THE PREMIER'S STATEMENT

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*The following statement of Government policy was made by Mr. MacDonald at the concluding session of the Conference :*

Your Highnesses, Ladies and Gentlemen: We have met for the last part of this Conference. You will believe me I am perfectly certain when I assure you that never in the whole of my life have I presided over a gathering with more pleasure and more pride than I have presided over this Conference (Applause). When I spoke to you at the end of the first part of our proceedings, I assured you that you had come here as our colleagues, that you would have no necessity to persuade us regarding status because our conception of my parliamentary colleagues as well was that you had come from India to meet us representing the legislature of Great Britain for the purpose of taking counsel together to achieve the purpose, the self-government of India (Applause).

I think I was right. I think you will go back to India whether you are disappointed as to the work or not and say we were met by our British colleagues on terms of hospitable equality (Applause) We have put our case before them and they have listened with a desire to accommodate us and they have put their case before us and we assure you that there is so much in their case, so much experience in the working of institutions, so much in relation to peculiar conditions of India that they and we must come to agreements upon it. Now we have gone

as far as we can go at this moment. You have to go back to India. We have to go back to our public opinion. You have spoken here subject to reconsideration, and subject to reaction which your public opinion will show to your work.

We Government and Parliamentary representatives alike have spoken in the same way and we must also listen to reactions. We must also explain, expound and defend, we must also make ourselves champions of your findings (Applause) and do our best to bring our people with us in our pilgrimage of hope to its conclusion (Applause). What have we been doing? Pledge after pledge had been given to India that British Raj was there not for perpetual domination. Why did we put facilities for education at your disposal? Why did we put in your hands text-books from which we draw political inspiration? If we meant that the people of India should for ever be silent and negative, subordinated to our rule, why have our Queens and our Kings given you pledges? Why have our Viceroy's given you pledges? Why has our Parliament given you pledges?

Why, when Morely-Minto Reforms were launched, did those reforms contain not merely machinery of Government but promise of advance. Why, when Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms were in due course launched, did they, too not only set up a system of government but give you a pledge that something else was to follow? The very Simon Commission itself was appointed not because there was Government in office desirous of change. The Simon Commission was appointed because it was contained as a sacred pledge in the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms and if to-day, if during the last ten weeks, we had met you with uniform non-possumus, we would have been untrue to the

pledges given to India by the Government for which we are responsible

When the Simon Commission was appointed—the Commission let me say, because I must say it, has done a work remarkable, conspicuous and essential (Cheers) You may agree with it or you may not, but you could not have come to conclusions with us to which you have come had there been no Simon Commission (Cheers) and had not the Simon Commission opened doors that up to then were closed and brought ears into action that up to then were deaf (Cheers) India will never be able to be too grateful or to show too great a gratitude for the labours of men who composed the Simon Commission (Cheers)

When that Commission was appointed we all agreed—leaders of the three political parties here agreed—that when British Government came to consider, came to give its literary system a legal constitutional value at some time or other, somehow consultation would have to take place between the representatives of the British Parliament and the representatives of Indian opinion and that is why you are here I regret profoundly that important sections of Indian political activity are not here too (Cheers)

I am one of those, who, I dare say, is regarded by you and my colleagues the same as belonging to left wing politics That is neither here nor there But do believe me, my Indian friends, Left wing, Centre, or Right, I am one of those who believe that he who sows enmity between peoples is not going to advance liberty in the world (Cheers) He who spreads suspicion, he who makes co-operation impossible, is not one of those agents for good that the world, in its present distracted frame of mind, is so much in need of If anything has been done by you and us here during the last ten weeks to make the youth

of India, inspired by its youth, turn to practical problems, turn to ways of conquest by calm reason, my case is unanswerable and I am prepared to put it to the test of reason. If anything that you and I have been able to do here will produce that result, and if we do nothing else, we will have made a great contribution to the progressive political development of the Indian nation.

Everyone must honestly admit that situations have arisen, like some of the communal difficulties, which have put obstruction in our way. Now I want you to take it from me that the attitude of the British Government in such relations is nothing more than an overpowering desire to leave you to settle your own affairs. We are not pro-Hindu. We are not pro-anything-else. If we are animated by anything it is by a conception of India herself—India a unity, India feeling behind and below and above and beyond her communal differences that the mystic bond of unity, which the great poets, the great philosophers and great religious teachers of India have always taught. Believe me, the British Government has no desire to use your disagreements for any ulterior purpose—quite the opposite. Our one ambition is that, being in a sense kith and kindred with you, its history, whether you liked it or whether we liked it, has woven our destinies somehow together—that we, feeling that we have this one desire—to use that unity with you in order that we might have your way and smooth you the path to that much required internal unity amongst yourselves.

In a few moments I will make further reference to the position of the minorities, but I take great pride and I am sure my colleagues do the same that as a result of this Conference and conversations both private and public that have taken place at this Conference, the gap between you

is much narrower than it was before (Cheers) and that the very men, who feeling that they must be loyal to their community were in sorrow that they were unable to agree, are inspired more by that feeling than ever and that in the conversations and negotiations that are going to take place they will be moved by it more than ever they had been before.

I have convinced my friends that you can settle it and I am also convinced of this—that an imposed agreement might make your constitution unworkable. I would like now to make one or two observations from the point of view, first of all, of one who had good deal of experience in political values—value of words and the value of provisions.

I have listened to some of my minority friends making their claims. Do remember this, my friends. We, sitting here, are not a legislature. We, sitting here, cannot impose pains and penalties. We, sitting here, can declare rights and hand over to you political power to see that these rights are enforced and respected. We can put in a constitution that this disability may not be put upon you and that the next disability may not be put upon you. Believe me, after some experience in those things, ultimately it depends upon the intelligence of your people. It depends upon their organisation. It depends upon their strength of will. It depends upon the success of their leadership as to whether words become deeds and declarations actions.

As regards the form of the constitution, all speakers have said that it has been determined that it is to be a Federation. Your Highnesses, I can add nothing to the tribute that has been paid to you by the previous speakers regarding the magnificent part you have played in making

that possible (Cheers). Before you came, the structure of the Indian constitution was in doubt. Many people as was said this morning, were doubtful when British India alone could bear central authority. You came and you made your declaration. You showed your patriotic interest in Indian affairs and your very wise vision regarding the future and your words made it possible for us to build up a constitution and to put political weight upon it of the nature of an All-India Federation. That has been the great achievement and the great work for which both India and Britain are grateful to Your Highnesses (Cheers).

In building up that constitution we have come across some very awkward things. There is a word which, when used in politics—and some of my friends here also know in economics—I detest and that is ‘safeguarding’ (Laughter). That is one of my sins, I suppose. Safeguarding—I do not like the word. It is an ugly word. It is a word which quite naturally rouses great suspicions in your hearts. It is a word the aspects, meanings, connotations and associations of which are forbidding; let us apply commonsense to it. The safeguards that have been suggested here fall under three categories. One category is the group of reserved powers given to somebody—Governor, Governor-General, Crown or somebody else. And that category of safeguards you will find, either expressed or implicit, in every free constitution from the rising sun to the setting sun. That category includes powers which may be put into operation by somebody authorised, somebody in authority somebody, in a distinguished position, in a powerful position in the state to be put into operation by him in the event of a breakdown of the ordinary normal operations of Government. And, my Indian friends, you can twist, you can turn, you can turn the blind eye to this,



the blind eye to that, you can draft with care and you can hide up what really is the substance of your draft, but if you were drafting your own constitution without any outside assistance or consultation you could not draft a constitution without embodying safeguards of that kind in it (Applause).

Then there is the second category of safeguards and there are two sections of that. The first covers guarantees made by the Secretary of State or by the British Crown for which, by virtue of contracts that we have made in your behalf, we remain responsible under a new constitution, just as under the existing one. The typical instance of that is Finance and also the existing Services. These guarantees, in the interests of India herself, have to be made clear to the world. It is not that we want to interfere. It is not even that we want the money. It is that if there were any doubt at all about India shouldering these obligations and responsibilities the moral status of India would be deteriorated and in spite of the materialism of this age there is far more of the materialist power founded on moral foundations than many of you wot of. It is to put India in a moral position in the eyes of the rest of the world that that section of reserved subjects will be required.

Then there is another section. There are matters not solely Indian, owing mainly to India's history and requiring some time for change. Do not be afraid of time. I know your patience has been tried. I know you have waited long, but, nevertheless, when you are going fastest you have not to be too penurious of time, because, that which is built—I do not say unnecessarily slowly—but that which is built calmly and steadily, step by step, endures, whilst that which is built in a hurry wastes away and comes to ruin.

Then there is the third category of safeguards relating to communities. Now, I repeat what I have said to you so often regarding that. If you fail to agree to set up your own safeguards and to come to a settlement between yourselves regarding those safeguards, the Government will have to provide in the constitution provisions designed for the purpose. But do remember the best of all is your own and we do not propose to lose grip of you. We do not propose to let you go as though you have said the last word here, because we do not believe you have said the last word.

Communities, small and great, must be safeguarded in the Indian constitution (Applause) not only in the terms of the constitution but the content of those terms, the details of those terms and a settlement that satisfies those terms. My Indian friends, are you to allow them to pass away from your own hands and ask anybody outside yourselves to do for you what you are going to declare you are not able to do for yourselves? (Applause).

There is one great danger inherent in these safeguards which I will mention, because it is of the utmost importance in the working of the constitution. The Ministers responsible must not shield themselves from taking upon their own shoulders their responsibility when it is unpopular, by leaving the Viceroy or the Governor to put into operation his reserved powers (Hear, hear).

Moreover, we have this problem in front of us too. In Executive, in particular, there must be unified responsibility (Applause). I am not going to push that observation to any more pointed conclusion, but a great task in forming the Executive is not so much the task of responsibility, which is the peculiar characteristic of legislatures. The great task in forming the Executive is to create

through the Executive the confidence of the legislature together with its own united working in policy.

Now, as regards the future, we have before us reports of various sub-committees all of them noted together with your observations upon them.

The Government proposes at once to study these very carefully in order to face the problems which they present to it. We have, for instance, Sub-Committee No. I, the Sub-Committee presided over with such conspicuous ability by the Lord Chancellor, who by that one act of service, has won for himself a great place in your hearts (Applause). That report is rough wood, if I may say so, wood of very varying lengths, full of knots, full of difficulties in handling and using and must be planned and fitted into logical and consistent structure.

The Sub-Committee No. II, has endorsed the principle of fully representative Government in Governors' provinces, subject to the retention by the Governors of certain powers which were widely agreed to be necessary at this stage.

The Minorities Sub-Committee, I have already referred to. You have not heard the last of us regarding that.

As to the Sub-Committee on Burma its findings have been noted and the Government will pursue the decisions of that Sub-Committee separating Burma and making the necessary enquiries as to the conditions upon which separation is to take place.

With regard to the North West Frontier Province, which was the subject of Sub-Committee No. V, that Sub-Committee recommended the elevation of its status to that of a Governor's Province, with a constitution analogous to that of the other Governor's Provinces, under the new regime, but with the necessary modification and adaptations

to suit the peculiar local conditions and requirements and with the necessary financial adjustments with the Central Government.

The Sub-Committee No. VI the Franchise Sub-Committee has recommended the setting up of a Committee and that Committee will be set up.

Sub-Committee No. VII dealt with Defence. That will be proceeded with and if it is possible to put into operation without the delay that will be required in the building up of a full constitution, some of its parts by administration, we shall get into touch with the Government of India and see how that can be done. I refer to such things for instance as the creation of a Military Sandhurst in India (Applause).

Sub-Committee No. VII dealt with the services and affirmed the necessity of continuing to the existing members of the services under the new constitution the guarantees which the present Act, and the rules framed under it give them and has explored the position as regards the future.

Sub-Committee No. IX dealt with Sind and adopted, with two dissentients, the principle that Sind should be formed into a separate province, but left its feasibility for future decision after an enquiry by an Expert Committee into financial problems involved. That also will be undertaken. I need not go through any more details than that. These pledges I give you. These statements I make relate to the administration and to the setting up merely of Committees.

One or two of you, who have had large experience in administration, have pressed upon us that under the existing Government of India Act, some things of importance could be done by the Administration to bring Indian Admi-

nistrative action more in accordance with the Declaration made here than is the case to-day. We cannot commit ourselves as to whether that is so or not, but we propose, in consultation with Indians of administrative experience, to explore that. As the result of the exploration we shall take action or otherwise. (Applause.)

At this point I may turn to the very moving appeal made by Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru to me this morning regarding amnesty. It was a wise and moving appeal, which, I can assure the Conference, lodges very naturally in my own heart. I should like this Conference to open a new chapter in the relations of India and ourselves. If Dr. Sapru's appeal to India, as well as to us, is responded to in India and civil quiet is proclaimed and assured His Majesty's Government will certainly not be backward in responding to his plea which is endorsed by so many of his colleagues here. (Applause).

Now, that brings me to the question of what is to be done to complete our labours. We have agreed upon certain features of the constitution but the successful launching of the constitution depends still upon a very careful study of the conditions and structure. I think it was Lord Peel who said that we were not so short-sighted, so self-centred, as to be under the impression that the only successful constitutional machinery is that under which we work ourselves. As a matter of fact if you ask my opinion, I can give you some very bad results of its working.

Therefore it is certainly not perfect. We have got the United States type. We have the type which has been used in Japan and which is of very great interest especially in some of its aspects if not in all. We have the type such as was used in Germany before the War. We

'have got the French methods and so on and in order that we may have all the world experience of working legislatures elected in different ways and composed in different ways we shall study those. We have as a matter of fact studied those and we hope to get from that study with your ideas, suggestions and plans from which the New Indian constitution can be benefited and made workable. Some conditions that have been attached to the working of the constitution have been practically agreed upon and they have become of the nature of problems that can quite easily be settled by the Chairman's ruling or by Government decision involving no principle and creating no friction. Others still require work especially the open questions and notes of dissent taken to report of Committee No. 1.

There is, for instance, the place of the States in the Federation and the provision which must be made that the States, in everything which they are not agreed to hand over to the Federal authority, owe direct contact to the Crown (Cheers). There is the composition of the Legislatures and the Executives and some problems regarding practical working. There are problems of communities and various details of safeguarding.

Now, I think I am right that so much work has been done upon this that the time has come for us to begin to try and draft something, because it is only when you begin to draft that you discover what you have overlooked and what you have not properly considered.

Now this work must not be left to the bureaucracy in either country, (Cheers), but must be conducted on the direct responsibility of politicians aided and guided by those admirably equipped servants of the States which both our Civil Services contain. (Cheers).

I hope, for instance that in further negotiations and explorations we are going to have the great pleasure of continuing the Parliamentary unity which has been maintained with so much good feeling during the last ten weeks in the work of this Conference (Cheers).

There is another important thing. One of the secrets of our success thus far—in fact I am not at all sure it is not the main secret of success is the personal contacts that we have been able to establish and keep going (Cheers). I have had a good deal of experience of these Conferences. One week of Conference produces more good than six months of diplomatic correspondence. Let us get down face to face. Let us sit round a table. Let each of us state our claims, state our hopes, state our fears, state our expectations. Let each of us be candid, one to another and, sitting face to face, there is an enormously better chance of understanding and agreement than under other circumstances (Cheers). I wish to continue that condition. There are practical difficulties as you know. Much work has still to be done in India, of educational and explanatory character.

At this minute, after all the heavy work we have had to undertake without remission during the whole day and very often far into the night, you will understand me when I say that I am not in a position at this moment to tell you precisely the plan by which those personal contacts are to be maintained. I mention that because I know that some of my friends place great store upon those points and I want to assure you, before you go home, that I thoroughly agree with you regarding them. I propose to confer at once with the new Viceroy, who is arriving here in a few days, and tell him what has been done—by my colleagues and myself, and I hope in this

that I may include my Parliamentary colleagues as well as my Governmental colleagues—and agree to a plan which will satisfy the requirements which I have just stated.

At this point I will read to you the Declaration which I am authorised to make by my colleagues of the Government.

The view of His Majesty's Government is that responsibility for the Government of India should be placed upon the Legislatures Central and Provincial, with such provision as may be necessary to guarantee, during a period of transition, the observance of certain obligations and to meet other special circumstances and also with such guarantees as are required by the minorities to protect their political liberties and rights. (Cheers).

In such statutory safeguards as may be made for meeting the needs of the transitional period it will be the primary concern of His Majesty's Government to see that the reserved powers are so framed and exercised as not to prejudice the advance of India through the new constitution to full responsibility for her own Government. (Applause).



will have authority only in such matters concerning the States as will be ceded by their rulers in agreement made by them on entering into the Federation. (Cheers).

The connection of the States with the Federation will remain subject to the basic principle that, with regard to all matters not ceded by them to the Federation their relations will be with the Crown, acting through the agency of the Viceroy (Cheers).

With a legislature constituted on the Federal basis His Majesty's Government will be prepared to recognise the principle of responsibility of the Executive to Legislature. Under the existing conditions, the subjects of Defence and External Affairs will be reserved to the Governor-General and arrangements will be made to place in his hands the powers necessary for the administration of those subjects. Moreover, as the Governor-General must as a last resort, be able, in an emergency, to maintain the tranquillity of the state and must similarly be responsible for the observance of the constitutional rights of minorities, he must be granted the necessary power for those purposes.

As regards Finance, the transfer of financial responsibility must necessarily be subject to such conditions as will ensure the fulfilment of the obligations incurred under the authority of the Secretary of State and the maintenance, unimpaired, of the financial stability and credit of India. The report of the Federal Structure Committee indicates some ways of dealing with this subject, including a Reserve Bank, the service of loans and exchange policy, which, in the view of His Majesty's Government, will have to be provided for somehow in the new constitution. It is of vital interest to all parties in India to accept these provisions to maintain financial confidence.

Subject to these provisions the Indian Government would have full financial responsibility for methods of raising revenue and for the control of expenditure on non-reserved services. This will mean that, under the existing conditions, the Central Legislature and Executive will have some features of dualism which will have to be fitted into the constitutional structure.

The provision of reserved powers is necessary in the circumstances and some such reservation has indeed been incidental to the development of most free constitutions, but every care must be taken to prevent conditions arising which will necessitate their use. (Hear, hear). It is, for instance, undesirable that Ministers should trust to special powers of the Governor-General as a means of avoiding responsibilities which are properly their own, thus defeating the development of Responsible Government by bringing into use powers meant to lie in reserve and in the background. Let there be no mistake about that.

The Governor's Provinces will be constituted on the basis of full responsibility. Their Ministries will be taken from the Legislature and will be jointly responsible to it. The range of Provincial subjects will be so defined as to give them the greatest possible measure of Self-Government. The authority of the Federal Government will be limited to the provisions required to secure its administration of the federal subjects and to discharge its responsibility for subjects defined in the constitution as of All-India concern. There will be reserved to the Governor only that minimum of special powers which is required in order to secure, in exceptional circumstances, the reservation of tranquillity and the guarantee of the maintenance of rights provided by the Statute for the the Public Services and the Minorities.

Finally, His Majesty's Government considers that the institution in the Provinces of Responsible Government requires, both that the Legislatures should be enlarged and that they should be based on a more liberal franchise. In framing the constitution His Majesty's Government considers that it will be its duty to insert provisions guaranteeing to the various minorities, in addition to political representation, that the differences of religion, race, sect or caste shall not in themselves constitute civic disabilities.

In the opinion of His Majesty's Government it is the duty of the communities to come to an agreement amongst themselves on the points raised there. During the continuing negotiations such agreement will continue to render what good offices it can to help to secure that end, as it is anxious not only that no delay should take place in putting the new constitution into operation but that it should start with the goodwill and confidence of all communities concerned.

The various Sub Committees, which have been studying the more important points of a constitution which would meet Indian conditions, have surveyed a considerable part of the structure in detail and the still unsettled points have been advanced a good way to an agreement.

His Majesty's Government, however, in view of the character of the Conference and of the limited time at its disposal in London, has deemed it advisable to suspend its work at this point so that Indian opinion may be consulted upon the work done and expedients considered for overcoming the difficulties which have been raised. His Majesty's Government will consider without delay a plan by which our co-operation may be continued so that the results of our completed work may be seen in a new India.

Constitution. If, in the meantime, there is a response to the Viceroy's appeal to those engaged at present in Civil Disobedience and there is a wish to co-operate on the general lines of this declaration, steps will be taken to enlist their services.

I must convey to you all, on behalf of the Government, our hearty appreciation of the services you have rendered, not only to India, but to this country, by coming here and engaging in these personal negotiations. Personal contact is the best way of removing these unfortunate differences and misunderstandings, which too many people on both sides have been engendering between us in recent years. A mutual understanding of the intention and difficulty gained under such conditions as have prevailed here is by far the best way for discovering the ways and means of settling the differences and satisfying the claims. His Majesty's Government will strive to secure such amount of agreement as will enable the new Constitution to be passed through British Parliament and to be put into operation with the active goodwill of the people of both countries (Applause). And now, my friends, we go our various ways. Our ten weeks of valuable co-operation and pleasant companionship and friendship are ended.

Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru said, I think, that he hoped he was leaving England with friendly memories behind him. I can assure you that that it is not only true of Sir Tej Bahadur. It is true of you all and I can only hope that the memories you are taking away of us are equally precious to you as your memories will be to us (Applause). I pray that our contacts and our negotiations may be continued, though oceans divide us by a whelm of seas. I hope you will go back and tell your compatriots what you have found. You may have to disagree sometimes

and somewhere with the letter of what has been written. I hope you will never have to disagree with the spirit in which you have been met (Hear, hear).

Finally, I hope and I trust and I pray that, by our labours together, India will possess the only thing which she now lacks to give her the status of a Dominion amongst the British Commonwealth of Nations, what she now lacks for that—the responsibilities and the cares, the burdens and the difficulties, but the pride and the honour of responsible self-Government (Loud applause).

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# APPENDIX

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## i. THE COMMONS' DEBATE

ON

### THE ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE

#### I. THE PREMIER

the House of Commons on January 26th, immediately after questions, the Premier initiated a debate on the Round Table Conference. It was in the nature of a review of the work of the Conference. After setting forth the nature of the work done at the Conference, the Premier pointed out the absolute necessity there was on all the parties to agree to the general conclusions adopted by the Conference and authorise his government to discuss the problems in detail with representative Indians and constitutional experts. He wound up his great speech with the following words:—

“The stage has almost been reached—I am not at all sure I should not be quite justified in saying that it has almost been reached—when we should begin our plans for trial drafts.

If we refused, supposing we do not do this, what are the prospects? Repression, nothing but repression and it is a very curious repression, very uncomfortable repression—a kind of repression from which we shall get neither peace nor success. It is the repression of the masses of

the people—a great proportion of these masses being women and children.

It is repression not of organisations, not of bodies but it will develop into a repression of a whole population. If we are prepared to march our soldiers from Himalayas to Cape Comorin, then refuse to allow us to go on.

“If we are prepared to subdue by force not only the people but the spirit of the time, refuse to allow us to proceed. If we are prepared to stage, for the whole world to behold, the failure of our political genius and at the same time provide it with a spectacle which will bring our name and our fame very low, indeed, then refuse to allow us to go on. If, on the other hand, you wish to bind India to you by bonds of confidence and make her happy within your Empire and Commonwealth, if you wish to hear her praise you in gratitude and remain with you in pride, then accept the work that has been done by the Conference and instruct the Government to proceed with it to its complete conclusion.” (Cheers).

## II. MR. STANLEY BALDWIN

Mr Stanley Baldwin strongly repudiated Mr. Churchill's view of the Indian situation and made in the course of his speech the following observations:—

“The imagination of the whole country had been caught by the idea of the United States of India. Therefore we were on entirely fresh territory. The whole situation had been changed by the attitude of the Princes.

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I do not believe that there will be any permanent solution of the question of Indian Government until you get complete co-operation, understanding and goodwill between Indians and ourselves.

## III. MR. WEDGWOOD BENN

Mr. Wedgwood Benn, the Secretary of State for India, made a vigorous onslaught on Mr. Churchill's criticisms and pointed out what the logical consequences of his policy would be :—

“What that has meant is lathi stick and, after rifle, the machine gun. You must either base the Government on the assent of the people or govern by force. The logical consequence of Mr. Churchill's policy, if put into force, is Government by force, without the assent of the people. The alternative is Government by the people for the people. That is why people of all parties have grasped the principle almost with unanimity.”

He wound up his speech as follows :—

“For the future, in our judgment, two things are necessary : one thing is sincerity, the second is speed. One of the effects of the Conference is that we have begun to re-establish the tender plant of understanding and trust by continuing the work of the Conference. We shall foster this plant for that purpose. Speed is necessary. What can be gained by delay ? If India is to be fitted for self-Government she must be fitted for it at the earliest moment.

Delay had been the tragedy in the past. Thirty years ago, men, who, to-day are opposing us in India were firm advocates of the British connection.

Mr. Gandhi was a stretcher-bearer in the South-African War and it was his influence which got us a large contribution of money and endless troops. There is no tragedy like delay and that is why I say it will require not only sincerity, but also speed.

Supposing that, by the labours of all parties in the House, something is done, supposing we succeed in build-



ing up a Constitution, not of sealed and delivered pattern on the English model, but something unique and moulded according to the tradition and spirit of the Indian people and resting in their good-will, if we can succeed in that, if all parties can succeed in that, we shall have done something to discharge the true mission of the British Commonwealth, which is to extend the area of peace and contentment in the world among the free peoples."

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
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